METHODISM

VERSUS

THE CHURCH,

OR

"WHY I AM A METHODIST"

ANSWERED.

BY A LAYMAN OF THE DIOCESE OF ONTARIO, CANADA.

"Her Foundations are Upon the Holy Hills."—Ps. lxxxvii.

1886.

PEMBROKE:

STEREOTYPED AND PRINTED AT THE "STANDARD" OFFICE.

The EDITH *and* LORNE PIERCE
COLLECTION *of* CANADIANA

Queen's University at Kingston

George Knight-Nesbitt
from
his brother
A. G. Nesbitt
Lent-1886

PREFACE.

The extensive circulation in this county, indeed throughout the province, of a small publication entitled "Why I am a Methodist," containing a defence of the Ecclesiastical position claimed by the Methodist society, and unwarranted statements regarding the Church of England, induced me to prepare the following letters. They were addressed to the Pembroke "Standard," a paper having a wide circulation in a county where Methodism is strong and aggressive.

There was no intention of reprinting these letters in pamphlet form while being published, but as several clergymen have asked for their re-publication, their appearance in the present form is a response to such request. With the exception of a few additional quotations from Wesley's works, they now appear as originally published.

A perusal of the Methodist publication must convince the *mildest* Churchman and every *candid* Methodist reader, of the provocation there was to reply in no uncertain manner to an attack which can be characterized as nothing less than dishonest. Though I have spoken out fearlessly yet I trust temperately, endeavouring, at the same time both to hold and to speak "the truth in love."

It was intimated in my circular that the Rev. Rural Dean Nesbitt would write an introduction to this pamphlet. I should have been pleased to have had such a statement as he is so eminently qualified to write prefixed to these pages. But as the opinion of several clergy, including the Rural Dean himself, was averse to any *clerical* hand appearing, I yield to their judgment.

For much in the following pages, no claim to originality is made. During their preparation, I availed myself of such aids as fell in my way, sometimes presenting the arguments of others in their same dress, oftener condensing, expanding, or otherwise changing their verbal costume. Besides these letters were written amid the cares of a family—for a time afflicted with sickness; and the management of the head office of a large mercantile house, exacting much time and labour, so that they are not as full and complete as I could wish. Such as this humble work is, however, it is submitted to the public with the earnest prayer

BX 8201 .R66 1885

that it may be to the advancement of God's glory, and the good of His Church—the earthly Home of the Holy Ghost.

THE AUTHOR.

County of Renfrew, Ont., Advent 1885.

P. S.—The quotations from John Wesley's works in the following pages are taken from the "Third American complete and standard edition, from the latest London edition, with the last corrections of the author. By John Emory. New York, Nov. 7, 1831."

"WHY I AM A METHODIST."

LETTER NO. 1.

DEAR SIR,—As already intimated, I beg to make some observations on the tract entitled as above, and that no injustice may be done to "Methodist," he shall always speak for himself in his own words. From this out then these notes will take the form of a dialogue between him and his commentator. In answer to "Episcopalian's" question why he had left the Church of England, says:

"Methodist"—"I was brought up in the Church of England, and attended its services from childhood to manhood. I joined in the formal prayers that were read, and heard prosy and pointless sermons preached every Sunday."

Comment—I take it that, in your reference to "formal prayers," your sneer is aimed, not at the *spirit* in which you and others may have "joined" in them, but at "prayers out of a book"—at the liturgy. To show how "pointless" is your remark I have only to remind you that many of the hymns sung by Methodists themselves are in fact "prayers out of a book." Take one example:

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee."
"Jesus, Saviour of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly."

What are these but "printed prayers," prayers in verse and set to music and sung. Are not "prayers out of a book" (see Book of Discipline, 1878), used in "the ministration of baptism?" When "renewing the Covenant?" at the "Solemnization of Matrimony?" On such occasions is not the service of the Church of England used? at the "laying of a corner stone?" at the "dedication of a church?" and at your "ordinations?" But will you say in all these instances they are any the less "from the heart?" Of course not. Indeed, is not "extemporaneous" prayer "formal?" Must it not be to the hearers *a form of prayer?* Did you ever hear Wesley's opinion of these "formal prayers" which you would belittle? Here's what he said of them in 1784—seven years before he died: "I believe there is no liturgy in the world, either in ancient or modern language, which breathes more of a solid, scriptural, rational tone than the common prayers of the Church of England.—Works vii., 580.

Hear also the opinion of good old Dr. Adam Clarke. In 1826 he said: "I reverence the liturgy next to the Bible."

This appears to be a fitting place to produce a few recent testimonials to the Prayer Book—these "formal prayers." Listen to the noble words of that eminent Presbyterian professor in the Theological Seminary at Auburn, N.Y.; Rev. Dr. Hopkins. He says: "That there is anything in the use of a book of prayer essentially unfavorable to spirituality in worship is a mere prejudice growing out of a want of experience. Christian people who use a book do not find it so. The number of Presbyterian ministers who openly advocate the use of some form of prayer is large, and the number of those who hope and anxiously wait for it much larger. It is by no means uncommon for Presbyterian ministers to use the Episcopal marriage service from preference." Hear also the testimony of the Rev. E. C. Abbott, pastor of the "First Christian" Church, Albany. An American paper reports him as saying in a recent sermon on "What I admire in the Protestant Episcopal Church," this: "I admire the Episcopal Church for her book of common prayer, and the dignity and beauty of her public services. There is no liturgy in the English language that would compare with it. In its lessons, gospels, psalms, confessions, collects, it is rich and venerable, and stands next to the Bible itself. In non-Episcopal churches the services are too barren of Worship." I don't wish to weary, but just listen to one more. The Rev. T. K. Beecher (Congregational), of Elmira, N.Y., said in a recent letter; "The Episcopal Church offers for our use the most venerable liturgy in the English tongue. No religious form-book can stand a moment in comparison with the prayer book of the E. C. in the two-fold quality of richness and age. The pious multitude that frequent her courts are drawn thither mostly by love of the prayers and praises, the litanies and lessons of the prayer book, and brethern of every name, I certify you that you rarely hear in any church a prayer spoken in English that is not indebted to the prayer book for some of its choicest periods; and further, I doubt whether life has in store for any of you an uplift so high, or downfall so deep, but that you can find comfort for the soul and fitting words for your lips among the treasures of this Book of Common Prayer."

Such testimony may be unpalatable to some as straws show how the wind is blowing. Ah! sir, it is only in comparatively recent times that denominations have arisen which have discarded the use of a prayer book. But their best men have regretted it. Their best men regret it still. The authority for a liturgy is God, Holy Scripture and the custom of the church, under the old and new dispensations.

A passing remark only as to the "prosy and pointless" sermons. Well, I am free to admit we have some "prosy" and perhaps "pointless" preachers, and that some should be found among a body of clergy numbering upwards of 30,000 is not a matter of much surprise. But is it only in the Church that such preachers are to be found? O no! The various religious bodies that surround her have their "prosy and pointless" ones too. I am satisfied that to-day the clergy are fully abreast with the preachers of any one of the denominations, and, as *teachers*, they are much ahead. However, it may be that quite an improvement in this respect has been made since you seceded, for the clergy *are* improving in preaching and teaching. It appears to me you had very invalid grounds for leaving the Church in which you were born and reared, without any choice of your own, just as God was pleased to ordain for you. The sermon is no doubt of great importance in the church's plan, but it is not *everything*. It is a *means* to lead us to something further. She would have her churches temples for the *worship* of God rather than mere "preaching houses." And so the pulpit is not practically substituted for the altar; each has its proper place in her system. The early Christians gathered

together on the "first day of the week," not merely to "hear a sermon," but for the "breaking of bread." True, as in Acts xx., St. Paul "preached to them," yet the purpose for which the assembly came together is expressly stated to have been the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. She regards the sermon then as an adjunct to the service, and specially to the Eucharistic service. I will conclude these notes with Wesley's reply to a like objection of yours in his day: "In almost all the sermons we hear there are many and important truths, and whoever has a spiritual discernment may easily separate the chaff from the wheat therein. (4) *How little is the case mended at the meeting?* (Reasons against Sep.)

LETTER NO. 2.

DEAR SIR,—I beg to continue my observations on the above tract.

Methodist—"We were always addressed as if we were all children of God, and needed no change."

Comment—And I think the Church had good authority for addressing you as "all children of God." In the first and lowest sense are we not all the children of God by *creation?* Thus we read: "Have we not *all* one Father: Hath not one God created us?" But the Church adheres closely to scripture in addressing *all* brought into covenant relationship with God as "children of God." The members of the Jewish Church were so addressed. "Israel is My Son, My first born; I have nourished and brought up children." And similarly are the members of the Christian Church addressed. "Ye are *all* the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Gal. iii., 26, 27. But did this mode of address imply the present *goodness* of the persons so addressed? Let us see! God says by Isaiah to the Israelites, "I have nourished and brought up children, *and they have rebelled against Me*.." And St. Paul says to the Galatians, "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth." Ch. iii., v-1. Were not both the prodigal and his brother "*sons?*" The son who leaves his home is yet a "*son;*" and when he returns does not his Father meet him as *His lost son*, and says respecting him, "this my son was dead, and is alive again."

By "needed no change" I suppose you wish to convey the impression that the Church of England does not believe in what is called "a change of heart." She nowhere, it is true, uses the term in her formularies. Neither, indeed, is it to be found in the Bible. But no one can doubt, who has read her offices, that the Church appeals to her children to be renewed, renovated and sanctified by the Holy Ghost. With no uncertain sound she everywhere proclaims the truth, that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord." From a mass of testimony I adduce only a part of the collect for Ash Wednesday: "Almighty and Everlasting God, who hatest nothing that thou hast made, *create and make in us new and contrite hearts.*"

Methodist—"I never was made to feel that I needed forgiveness or regeneration."

Comment—Well, I am satisfied it was *your own fault*, not the Church's. Perhaps it may be well to pause for a moment to ask, what is *your* view of the word "regeneration?" Do you mean by it that change of hopes, views, affections and desires, which takes place in a man when he renounces Satan and sin and returns to God? If so, the Church calls this conversion, and I need not produce proof that the true doctrine of conversion has its proper place in the Church's plan. And where, tell

me, is repentance, which is a deeper thing than conversion, more faithfully preached than in the Church? But if you mean by it the Covenant blessing that God has attached to the sacrament of baptism, when worthily received, the Church would not appeal to you to seek it, but would rather hold you responsible for having already received the blessing. Adhering closely to scripture she holds all the baptized responsible for grace received at the time of their baptism. She tells the baptized sinner living without God that, unless he repents, his condemnation will be infinitely worse, as the condemnation of one "who has received the grace of God in vain." This by the way. To return. I am inclined to think if you had never heard a sermon you could hardly have helped, had you had the disposition to *yield*, "feeling the need of forgiveness;" for the "need of forgiveness" is most fully set forth in all her services. Did you really lift your soul to God in the prayer "O most mighty God, and merciful Father, who hast compassion upon all men, mercifully forgive our tresspasses; receive and comfort us, who are grieved and wearied with the burden of our sins?" Did you ever really *pray* in the Litany:— "That it may please Thee to give us true repentance; to forgive us all our sins?" If not, blame not the Church for not having felt the need of "forgiveness," but rather shoulder the blame yourself. God, you know, rewards earnestness. We must "*ask*," "*seek*" and "*knock*."

My brother! let me ask you the question. Did you thoroughly try the system of the Church, to see what is its effect? She has appointed various services. Did you faithfully attend *all* of them, Sunday and week-days, on Festivals and in Lent? Did you act on the principle, that nothing but an insuperable obstacle should prevent you from being present? If you did not then you know nothing of the influence of her holy system. Did you observe as you should her regular fast days, by which she would discipline our spirits, recall our affections from a world fast passing away, afflicting the soul here that it may be saved hereafter? If you did not, month after month, year after year, sit humbly at her feet, and listen to her teaching, what right have you to allege that she does not supply every spiritual want? She can only place her system before you, and then leave it to yourself to enjoy its benefits or not. I fear you never really did make a trial of her power, and so, to be honest, should have had to say at the end of each ecclesiastical year:

> "Now through her round of holy thought,
> The Church our annual steps has brought,
> But *I* no holy fire have caught."

LETTER No. 3.

DEAR SIR,—I beg to renew my observations on the above tract.

Methodist—"When I went among the Methodists I learned, through their preaching, that I needed forgiveness."

Comment—Surely it was not necessary for you to go "among the Methodists" to learn this truth? Does not the old Church, with the Holy St John, teach us "daily" to say: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us?" Yes, she would train us to regard ourselves, even when we may "have done all those things which are commanded," as "unprofitable servants."

Methodist—"The way of faith was clearly pointed out to me."

Comment—In these words you more than insinuate that such is not done in the Church. As a matter of much importance is involved here it must be somewhat fully considered. Your plea, put into other words, amounts to this, that the Gospel, or the Truth, is preached by the Methodists. Now this is just the claim advanced by each denomination in its turn. But when we remember the numerous forms of faith that are professed by the Christian denominations, it is quite evident that *all* cannot be the truth. Truth cannot have a hundred forms. "God is not the author of confusion, but of peace."

Before proceeding to point out the Church's plan for presenting to man the Gospel of the Son of God, let me suggest one or two scriptural tests of the truth. Assuming that you are fully assured in your own mind of the truth of that form of Christianity which you have adopted, I will not ask you if *false* doctrine is taught; but pass on to other tests. Are you sure that the preaching of Christ in your communion is not *defective*. You will remember that St. Paul expressly warns the Corinthian teachers that even though the foundation of their teaching be laid in Jesus Christ, yet "let every man take heed *how* he buildeth thereupon;" I. Cor. iii., 10. The foundation must not only be laid in Jesus Christ, but the bidding of St. Paul must be followed: "Leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection." I ask, then, is the preaching of Christ to which you listen, when tested by the standard of Holy Writ, in any way *defective*.

But, secondly, the teaching may be *distorted*. St. Paul uses an expression which is full of instructive meaning. He urges those who prophesy (*i.e.*, preach) to prophesy "*according to the proportion of faith;*" Rom. xii., 6. These words clearly mean that not only are *all* the doctrines taught in the Bible to be taught, but they are to be taught in *due proportion*. If your teachers select one doctrine and force it into undue prominence, it cannot be said of them that they "rightly divide the word." And is it not a fact that the doctrine of the Incarnation—the

corner-stone of the whole Gospel system—is made to give place in your communion to the doctrine of the Atonement? Is not comparatively little said about the Incarnation and Resurrection of the Son of God, whereas much is said about His *Death?* And, unlike the Church, your system does not make up for any shortcoming on the part of the preacher in respect of observing the "due proportion of faith." You have no guarantee that the "due proportion of faith" shall be preserved. I ask, then, is your teaching *distorted?* Let me press upon you St. Paul's counsel: "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your ownselves."

Now, I believe that, tried by Holy Scripture, the teaching of the Church of England will be found neither defective nor distorted. I claim not for the clergy any immunity from error. As men they are equally liable to err as their fellow men. They need the prayer, God knoweth, "that it may please Thee to illuminate all bishops, priests and deacons with true knowledge and understanding of Thy Word" (Litany). The churchman bases his confidence on the Church's system. Forseeing the liability of human teachers to err, either in omitting God's Truth, or in disturbing "the proportion of faith," she has, as far as possible, mapped out the Christian year, assigning a place to each doctrine, and also, as it were, measuring out its proportionate value. Persons putting themselves under her guidance have a guarantee that the Gospel shall be presented to them in that particular form in which it appears in Holy Writ. The Gospel appears there as certain facts having to do with the Second Person in the Ever Blessed Trinity. These facts are the Incarnation, Birth, Life, Death, Burial, Resurrection and Ascension of the Son of God. This is the Gospel which St. Paul preached, and by which his converts were saved. Let me notice how the Church adheres to this form of presenting the Gospel to her children. The Christian year begins in Advent. Our eyes are turned to the coming of Christ. For four weeks we dwell upon the thought how He came down from Heaven for us men and for our salvation. We celebrate that coming at Christmas. We then strive to realize not only the Godhead but the Manhood of our Saviour, "very God, and very Man." On the Festival of Epiphany we have His adoration by the Magi as the first fruits of the Gentile World. During this season the character of Jesus Christ is unfolded. Then the note of coming sorrow is sounded in our ears, and we enter on the forty days of Lent. As He fasted in the wilderness, so are we called upon to practise self-denial. We are called upon to take up our cross, and follow the Man of Sorrows. In Holy Week, His Hour being at hand, we are bidden to "watch with Him one hour." On Good Friday we picture step by step the Cross and Passion, Precious Death and Burial. From Lenten Sorrow we emerge on Easter joy, when His Resurrection is set forth. For forty days we live over in contemplation the forty days He spent on earth after His Resurrection. On Ascension day His Exaltation is set forth. On Whit Sunday is set forth the fulfilment of the promise of the Father. Then one day is devoted to the contemplation of the mystery of the Holy, Blessed and Glorious Trinity, Three Persons and One God. This is the foundation of their faith. For the rest of the year we are invited to build upon it. This is surely to "rightly divide the word of Truth." To "clearly point out the way." This is to omit nothing; to give to each doctrine its proper place and proportionate value. Even if the ministers fail the Services preserve "the proportion of faith." This is our guarantee. Thus we see how the year in its silent course preaches the very Gospel of Scripture. This is the churchman's goodly heritage. The Gospel of our salvation has come down to us in its purity, and the Prayer Book is full of it from beginning to end. And the Church falls in with

the mind of the Spirit as to the form in which the Gospel is to be presented to man. A few examples must suffice. We are called upon to confess twice in daily prayers the Apostles' Creed, in which we recount the great facts which alone are designated in Holy Writ as the Gospel. Then this creed is turned into a psalm of praise—the Te Deum—in which, in the most wonderful words, we thank God for the knowledge of the same great facts of Redemption. "Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ! Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father. When thou tookest upon Thee to deliver man Thou didst not abhor the Virgin's womb. When Thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death Thou didst open the kingdom of Heaven to all believers." Lastly, in the Litany we beseech the Saviour to deliver us "by the mystery of His Holy Incarnation; by His Holy Nativity and Circumcision; by His Baptism, Fasting and Temptation; by His agony and Bloody Sweat; by His Cross and Passion; by His Precious Death and Burial; by His glorious Resurrection and Ascension; and by the coming of the Holy Ghost." Surely this is "clearly pointing out the way." Did you ever realize it? Surely not, as you could not have parted with such a goodly heritage. How groundless, so far, have been your reasons for deserting your lawful spiritual Mother. If you can't return to her, on whose brow time writes no wrinkles, cease misrepresenting her—your "first love." Think not you can stay her progress. Your efforts in this direction must be in vain. In the words of the Congregational minister already quoted; "They shall prosper that love her."

LETTER NO. 4.

DEAR SIR,—I beg to continue my observations on the above tract.

Methodist—"I trusted in Christ and felt my heart strangely warmed with the joy of salvation."

Comment—It is not for me to question the sincerity of your "trust" —your faith—"in Christ." This is no business of mine. To "his own master he standeth or falleth." But what struck me on reading the above passage, and indeed your whole tract, was this—you appeared to feel quite satisfied with your present spiritual attainments. Nothing more to do. "Converted and therefore saved." In a few moments prepared for Heaven. But the theology that tells men to believe, only to believe, to believe that Christ saves them, "just now," has no place for "hope." It has destroyed "*hope*." And yet this theology is professedly based on God's Word. But what saith that authority about "hope?" In Heb. vi. "Hope" is described as "an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast." In Rom. viii. it is said "*we are saved by hope*." Wesley, in his N. T. Notes, which are of binding obligation in your communion, in commenting on this latter passage, says: "Our salvation is now only in hope. We do not yet possess this full salvation." Here we have an instance of the Founder and the follower disagreeing. Of course the way out of the difficulty is simple and easy. The Founder is "not held to be infallible" by the follower. Had St. Paul experienced the "personal assurance" we hear so much of, he could never have seriously contemplated the possibility of his becoming a castaway. No. We are, God the Holy Ghost assisting us, to "*work out* our salvation with fear and trembling." Philip. ii., 12. We are "to give diligence to make our calling and election sure." 2 Peter, i., 10. Lastly, "He that shall *endure unto the end* the same shall be saved." Mark xiii., 13. O then cease the lullaby with which you would put the world to sleep. Tell men that the preparation for Heaven is a task for which the longest life is short. But tell not the churchman that he undervalues faith. To the faith that exalts Christ he subscribes with a thousand hearts; but the faith that exalts *faith*, and makes faith, or an inward experience, its "all in all," he casts to the moles and to the bats. He is told that "faith *without works* is dead." S. James ii., 20. He is told to add to his faith *virtue;* and to virtue *knowledge;* and to knowledge *temperance;* and to temperance *patience:* and to patience *godliness;* and to godliness *brotherly kindness;* and to brotherly kindness *charity*. A "man may say he hath faith and have not works;" the Church does not hesitate to ask with the fearless Apostle, "*Can faith save you?*" In short, "practical religion is a holy chain, link fastened to link, Christ to faith, faith to hope, hope to charity, charity to holiness, holiness to Heaven, and Heaven to Christ again, in God. They who see nothing but faith in the Bible break the celestial chain that reaches from this dark world to Heaven." The language of Wesley may be appropriately quoted in conconclusion. "If we duly join faith and works in all our preaching we shall not fail of a blessing. But of all preaching, what is usually called

'Gospel preaching,' is the most useless, if not the most mischievous—a dull, yea, or lively harangue on the sufferings of Christ, or salvation by faith without strongly inculcating holiness. I see more and more that this naturally tends to drive holiness out of the world." Works vi., 674.

But there was another thing that struck me on reading the passage referred to—that your view of "the faith" appears to be a very narrow one. "I trusted in Christ"—the Second Person in the Blessed Trinity. There is no hint about faith in the Father or in the Holy Ghost. But see how broad is the view put before men by the Church. Briefly stated, it is this. In order to be saved we must believe in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, and in everything either of these three Persons has done or is doing for the souls of men. We are taught by the Church that "in this Trinity none is afore or after other, none is greater or less than another," and further, "that the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost is all one, the glory equal, the majesty co-eternal." We must come to God through Christ, by the Spirit. We must come to God, the First Person, through the Second, by the Third.

LETTER NO. 5.

Dear Sir,—I beg to continue my observations on the above tract.

Methodist—"I united with the Methodist Church the first opportunity, because it had been the instrument of my salvation."

Comment—How easily this step appears to have been made. What little thought it appears to have cost you. Just like a person passing from one room to another. But, as has been already shown to some extent, and as will be more fully pointed out presently, it is not the same. You allege your "salvation" was accomplished before you separated from the Church; yet, while in this "saved" condition you scrupled not to rend the body of Christ—to do the Lord an injury—to trample under foot that which was so near and dear to His Heart—"That they all may be one." You don't appear, as any thoughtful and prayerful person should, to have considered your position. For while it was quite natural to entertain heartfelt love and gratitude for the person by whose instrumentality you were brought to experience all you allege to have experienced, you owed a duty to your Ma ter. That duty is not to take part in, or perpetuate schism, for "neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase." 1 Cor., iii., 7. As the question of the unity of the Church comes up later on I will reserve my remarks on that subject in the meantime. But on leaving the Church of England you set at nought one of the fundamental principles of Wesleyan Methodism. One must read his works to form any adequate conception of how Wesley abhorred separation from the Church. It may be well to give a few examples. In 1756 he writes: "My brother and I closed the conference by a solemn declaration of our purpose never to separate from the Church, and all our brethren concurred therein." Works iii., 616. In 1775, "Nineteen years ago we considered the question in our public conference at Leeds—Whether the Methodists ought to separate from the Church? and, after a long and candid inquiry, it was determined that it was not expedient then to separate. The reasons were set down at large; and they stand equally good to this day." Works ii., 369. In 1785, "Finding a report had been spread abroad that I was just going to leave the Church, to satisfy those that were grieved concerning it, I openly declared in the evening that I had now no more thought of separating from the Church than I had forty years ago." Works iv., 624. In his sermon on the Ministerial office, reaffirmed in 1789—about two years before his death—he says: "I dare not separate from the Church, for I believe it would be a sin to do so." Further on he says, "Ye yourselves were first called in the Church of England; and though ye have and will have a thousand temptations to leave it, and set up for yourselves, regard them not; *be Church of England men still;* do not cast away the peculiar glory which God hath put upon you, and frustrate the design of Providence, the very end for which God raised you up." Works ii., 543. In 1789, at the Dublin Conference, at which some fifty preachers were present, he said, "I never saw such a number of preachers before

so unanimous in all points, particularly as to leaving the Church, *which none of them had the least thought of.* It is no wonder that there has been so large an increase of the society." Works iv., 725. And fifteen months before his death he said, "I declare once more that I live and die a member of the Church of England, and that none who regard my judgment and advice will ever separate from it." Works vii., 326. Both time and space forbid quoting further, but enough has been produced to show the stand Wesley took with regard to separating from the Church.

Before, however, taking the final step did you examine the authorized documents of the "Methodist Church" to see whether or not they were consistent with God's Word? It does not appear that you did. I have been dipping recently into the "Book of Discipline," and I was not a little surprised when I stumbled on this passage, which occurs on page 21. The "Methodist Church," or as it is there called "the United Society" is described as: "A company of men, having the form and seeking the power of godliness, united in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation and to watch over one another in love, that they may help each other to work out their salvation." In other words, the "Methodist Church" is composed only of *religious* men, or *religiously disposed* men. Now I am forced to say, after no little consideration, that such a church as *this* is directly contrary to that which Christ established, and therefore *cannot* be Christ's Church, whatever else it may be. Permit me now to bring the "Book of Discipline" notion of a church to the test of God's Word. And no Methodist can reasonably object to this mode of procedure, as on page 24—B. of D.—I find the Bible declared to be "the *only rule* and the *sufficient rule*, both of our faith and practice." Turning to the 13th chap. of St. Matthew I find Christ compares *His* Church to a net, in which were caught fishes both *good* and *bad;* and they "gathered the *good* into vessels, but cast the bad away." "So," He adds, "shall it be at the end of the world; the Angels shall come forth and sever the wicked from the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire." In the same chapter Christ compares *His* Church to a field wherein *tares* were sown with the *wheat;* that the *tares* were to remain until the harvest, when they were to be burned, but the *wheat* was to be saved. And 'the *harvest* is the end of the world.'" Thus, then, according to the express declaration of Christ, *His* Church is to be composed of the *wicked*, as well as the *good*, and the *wicked* are to remain in the Church with the *good* until "the end of the world," when the angels of God will separate them. Various other parts of Scripture might be quoted for the same purpose, and especially the Epistles to the Seven Churches of Asia—all going to show that Christ's description of His Church was true to the very letter; that it was to be composed of *wicked* men mixed with the *good*. The Methodist notion of a church, that it is to be composed only of "*men having the form, and seeking the power of godliness,*" is, to my mind, a delusion and directly contrary to the Scriptures. I cannot find any such church as the "Methodist Church" is described to be, in the Holy Scriptures. Can it be, then, the Church, or an integral portion of the Church, which Christ and His Apostles founded?

But enough! enough! Did you ever consider all this, and much more besides? O how you could separate from the Church of England, which is admitted to be an integral portion of God Almighty's Catholic Church, having an Apostolically Ordained Ministry reaching back through the ages to the Apostles themselves, and linked to the very Throne of God—with valid sacraments—with a Scriptural Liturgy—and which has moreover, succeeded in retaining the Treasure committed to her keeping eighteen centuries ago, and bringing it down through time to

this latter half of the nineteenth century, so that to-day she stands forth strong enough to hold that Treasure up triumphantly before the world, being at once the admiration of her friends and the wonder of her enemies —I know not. O let me plead with you to reconsider your position. Remember, there is not a single *truth* which is dear to you but what has always been held, and with more or less distinctness, insisted on by the Church. She will open her arms wide to welcome you back; and for any indifference in the past she will more than atone. Finally, let me remind you that there is a bond between the Church and Methodism, such as exists between no other two religious bodies. "The holy soul of John Wesley, now in Paradise, is a strong link which can never be broken between the Church he loved so well and the society which still professes to follow him."

LETTER NO. 6.

Dear Sir,—With your permission I will continue my observations on the above tract.

Methodist:—"I hold that what the Church exists for is to teach men the sinfulness of sin, guide sinners to Christ, and help its members in the way to Heaven; and the Church that is most successful in doing this work is the best Church, just as that is the best axe that cuts the best."

Comment:—You have apparently grasped only the *subjective* view of the Church—that which refers to man; the *objective* view you have apparently lost sight of. The former view is equally true with the latter one, but not equally important. That God intended His Church to train his children for Heaven is true—the aspect as it refers to man—but Holy Scripture sets the Church before us in another aspect—as it refers to Christ. The Church is described, in reference to Christ, (1) as "His Body," Eph. i. 23; (2) as His "Bride," Rev. xxi. 9. These expressions though used in a mystical sense, convey to our minds one feature which is essential to our idea of either, namely, *unity*. Now, the highest view which we can take of Christ's Mystical Body is to preserve its oneness or unity, because this mark of the Church has an objective reference to Christ himself. And similarly with the second figure—the "Bride." We are taught by this figure that the Lamb can have but one Bride. In other words there can be but one Church. Have you grasped this truth? With your tract before me I can safely say you have not. Yet it is a Bible truth. And pardon me for telling you that your axe illustration is most childish.

Methodist.—"The Methodists not only lead me to Christ, but I found sympathy and help from godly men and women in their class-meetings and prayer meetings."

Comment:—"Led to Christ"—but surely not for the *first* time? Were you not led or brought to Christ at the time of your baptism—when you were incorporated into His Mystical Body? But methinks I hear the retort, "That is not sufficient. I was a baby then and did not *know* what I was doing, or what was being done for me—we must consciously come to Christ."

Very well; there are various ways in which we may come to Christ. One of these ways is in Holy Confirmation. This is the tie that binds our youthful Isaacs to the altar. If you were a worthy confirmee you not only confirmed certain promises, but were confirmed in the faith of Christ, receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost. And again, in Holy Communion, did you not "Come to Christ" to be fed with the Spiritual Food in order to the sustaining of the Spiritual life in your soul? Ah yes, this is the blessed way of 'coming to Christ.' "We dwell in Christ and Christ in us'; we are one with Christ, and Christ with us." Herein the

penitent believing soul realizes the 'comforting words'—"Come unto me all ye that travail and are heavy laden, and I will *refresh* you." Or in the Book of Discipline language: "grant us, therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of Thy Dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that our sinful souls and bodies may be made clean by his death, and washed through his most precious blood, that we may evermore dwell in Him and He in us." P.181. These are some of the ways in which the Church invites you and invites all Her children to 'come to Christ'—the God—Man—in His Holy Church—His Body Mystical on earth. Did you accept the invitation, or were you of that number who systematically refuse to be led to the Incarnate One to be touched by Him and be healed? Passing over in silence your reference to 'godly men and women'—as I am not dealing with Methodists—among whom are many excellent persons, and, I may add, among whom I have some valued friends and relations—but with Method*ism*, I must ask you to excuse me if I consider the position assigned to the 'class-meetings' in your Communion. And here again, do not misunderstand me. I condemn not your "class-meetings.' Let every prop or help that may be useful to us while on our journey be used, even though it be the creature of man. But I *do* condemn the putting of this purely human invention in the place and above that which is of God's appointment. Let us examine into this a little. On page 32 the Book of Discipline declares: "If any of the members of our Church willfully and repeatedly neglect to meet in class let the Superintendent or his assistant visit them whenever it is practicable, and explain to them the consequence if they continue to neglect, namely, *exclusion*." Again, "If they do not amend, let the Superintendent of the circuit exclude them, (in the church), showing that they are *laid aside* for a breach of our Discipline, and not for *immoral* conduct." Thus, then, it appears, though a member of the "Methodist" church should attend their *public worship* regularly; though he should be regular at their communion table; though he should live a pure and upright life, yet they all count for nothing; he has committed the *mortal sin* of not attending the "class;" and for *that*, he is "*laid aside*"—"*excluded*," shut out from all the privileges of the church of God, for such the "Methodist Church" professes to be. Tell me, my friend, was ever such a doctrine as this heard before? Was it ever before heard that a man was to be "laid aside"—"excluded" from the church of God if he refused to attend *class* meetings. No, never, until the Methodists made the discovery. O tell it not in *Gath*. For what is this, but to set these "classes" *above* the public worship of God, *above* His Sacraments, *above* a holy life. And yet the B of D declares that God's "written Word is the *only* rule, and the *sufficient* rule, both of your faith and *practice*." Now I would like to know where, in the whole Bible, it is said that we are to be "excluded"—shut out from the church of God, for refusing to attend *class meetings*. I repeat: let the question be answered. Let there be no blinking the question. Let it be pointed out where the Bible authorizes such a *practice*. And if *such* a practice cannot be shown to have the sanction of God's Word, let it be acknowledged that God's "written Word" is *not* the Methodist "rule of *practice*."

Methodist:—"Had I remained in the Church of England, I would only have been mocked as an enthusiast by those who say they are regenerated in baptism, but are ignorant of spiritual religion."

Comment:—It tries ones patience to deal with such stuff as this, yet it calls for a passing notice. Your own B of D has no very exalted opinion of "enthusiasts." On page 98 it says: "Why are we not more holy? Why do we not live in eternity? Walk with God all the day long? Why

are we not all devoted to God, breathing the whole spirit of missionaries? Chiefly because we are *enthusiasts*, looking for the *end* without *using the means*." And on what ground do you charge "those who say they are regenerated in baptism" with being "ignorant of spiritual religion?" Why, sir, it is the very men who have most firmly held and taught the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration that have been most eminent for their "spiritual religion" and for enforcing its necessity on others. Read the writings of Drs. Pusey, Liddon, Dekoven, Ewar, and a host of others, and then say, if you dare, that these men are "ignorant of spiritual religion." The *lives* of such men is the best answer to your uncharitable charge. Your own Founder, Wesley, could write: "*By water*, then; as a means, the water of Baptism, we are *regenerated or born again*, whence it is called by the Apostle 'the washing of regeneration.'" Works vi. 15. Do you charge John Wesley with being "ignorant of spiritual religion?" But let me come perhaps nearer home. In your XVII article, Baptism is said to be "a sign of *regeneration*, or new birth." To this article *all* Methodist preachers *must* subscribe. Are they on this account "ignorant of spiritual religion." If your argument holds water at all it *proves them* to be likewise ignorant. Thus, then, your argument or rather *assertion* proves *too much* for your own good, if it proves anything. In conclusion let me remind you shortly of the exalted place assigned to Baptism by Incarnate Wisdom in the "Spiritual religion" which *He* taught. When Nicodemus, a pious Jew, came to the Saviour to know something of His religion, He made known to him the first mystery of His kingdom—the new birth or *Re*-generation. And in what terms does He set forth this truth? Wonderful to relate, He connects this new birth with *water*,—"Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." John iii., 5. But to separate what He has joined—the "water" and the "Spirit"—is to question His Wisdom in having joined them. Whensoever, then, a man is "born again," there and then he must be "born of water and of the Spirit." The two must be together, or you have not *the birth* indicated by Christ. Now we can think of no other time when this takes place, except the time of our initiation into God's church by Baptism. Accordingly, baptism is on the very front of the "spiritual religion" taught by the Wisdom of God, for in laying down the terms of admission into His kingdom He says, "He that believeth *and is baptized* shall be saved." St. Mark xvi., 16. And what is the answer vouchsafed to the question of the "three thousand" anxious inquirers on the Day of Penticost, "Men and brethren, what shall we do to be saved?" Marvellous to relate, again Baptism, "*the water*," in the answer of the Holy Spirit, directing them what to do to be saved, "Repent, *and be baptized* every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ *for the remission of sins*. Acts ii., 38. Now this is precisely the position assigned to Baptism by the Church of England in her system. Her Prayer Book statements respecting Baptism and its benefits are the mere echo of the above and other Scripture statements respecting that sacrament. Or as Wesley says: "Our church ascribes no greater virtue to baptism than Christ has done." Works vi., 15. But there is evidently no such harmony between *your* system and the one devised by God the Holy Ghost.

LETTER No. 7.

Dear Sir,—Permit me to continue my observations on the above tract.

Methodist—"They have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof. I would be more likely to be led into worldly folly than helped heavenward by associating with such people."

Comment—I must confess, when I read the above lines, and saw the fearful charge directed against the sons and daughters of the Church of England, I felt the "Old Adam" working within me and tempting me to say hard things in reply, but thank God, I remember the words which my mother church puts in my mouth under such temptations: "That it may please Thee to *forgive* our *enemies, persecutors,* and *slanderers,* and to turn their hearts, we beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord." *Litany.* Permit me, however, to remind you that in thus judging the heart of your fellow men you are violating that charity which "thinketh no evil"—without which we are "become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." But how you have arrived at your conclusions is not stated. From my own observations I cannot but perceive that our own people walk as consistently as those who are called by other names. The question involved here is entirely intangible, and I can't pretend to discuss the amount of religion among my fellow churchmen, as compared with the religious bodies around, for God has not given me the power thus to judge the heart. I cannot decide upon the spiritual condition of my neighbours. I would rather fear everything for ourselves, and to hope everything for others. "For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves; but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves are not wise." 2 Cor., x., 12. Let me remind you that *talking* about religion is not religion itself. To possess an elevated degree of devotion is one thing, to be familiar with its language and to have it ever on our lips, is another. The Church tells her children that their daily lives must be the test. They are not taught to form erroneous conclusions with respect to others, but, by God's help, in silence and quiet, to train themselves up for heaven. The Church's lesson is: "In *quietness* and confidence shall be your strength." Her direction is that of the Apostle: "Judge nothing before the time until the Lord come."

Methodist—"Your objections rest upon a false and unscriptural theory of the Church. All true believers in Christ belong to His Church."

Comment—Yes, if they have been *baptized.* But this is apparently among the things condemned as "false and unscriptural," judging from the reference you have made "Episcopalian" make to the sacraments, reading between the lines, and your reply as above quoted. Let us examine briefly to see which theory is really "false and unscriptural." Our Lord came not merely to teach religious doctrines but to found a society—a

world embracing society—His Church, and no one can doubt that He did what He came to do—left behind Him, not only a large amount of precious truth, but also a great Divine Society, having its officers, its rules, its rite of admission and so forth. But no man, by the action of his own mind and heart, can make himself a member of this society, any more than he can make himself a member of any one of the various societies, *e.g.*, Masonic, Odd Fellows, and the like, that are in our midst. Merely *believing* in these societies does not *make* us members. We must be admitted *by others*, according to the rules of admission. And so with the Church. That society must take the "true believer" up, must engraft him into its bosom, according to its own rules, before he can become a member of it. We cannot admit ourselves into a society. We must be admitted into it according to its own rules, and by its own officers. How then, are we to be admitted into His Kingdom—the Church. I answer by Baptism. Our Blessed Lord Himself has written across "the narrow gate" of His Kingdom the sentence: "Except a man be born of water and of the spirit he *cannot* enter into the Kingdom of God." John iii., 5. And when Christ sent forth the Apostles to "preach the Kingdom of God," and to bring men into it, these were the words of his commission: "Go ye and teach all nations, *baptizing* them." Matt. xxviii., 19. It is said of the three thousand souls to whom St. Peter preached on the Day of Penticost that "they that gladly received his word were baptized," and that they were thus "added to the Church." Acts ii., 41-47. The Son of God, in laying down the terms of admission into His Kingdom, not only says, "He that believeth," but adds, "and is baptized." "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Mark xvi.. 16. St. Paul, though converted by a miracle, deeply penitent, and a true believer, required still to be baptized. "And now why tarriest thou! arise, and be baptized, and *wash away thy sins*, calling on the name of the Lord." Acts xxii., 16. Does the jailer cry, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" The answer is, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." But then he must show his belief in the King by entering His Kingdom, and so that very night "he was *baptized*, he and all his, straightway." Acts xvi., 33. Baptism is the only way of entrance into the Church of God. St. Paul declares, "There is one Lord, one Faith, *one Baptism*." Eph. v., 5. "By one Spirit we are all *baptized into one* body," 1 Cor., xii., 13, which "body" is "*the Church*." Col. i., 18.

Agreeably to all this we find John Wesley saying in his "Treatise on Baptism," "*By baptism* we are admitted into the Church, and consequently made members of Christ, its head. For 'by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body,' namely, the Church, the body of Christ." And a little further on he says, "In the ordinary way, there is no other means of entering into the Church or into Heaven." Works vi., 15. Your own standard—the Book of Discipline—may also be cited. Article xvi. "of the Sacraments" declares "Sacraments ordained of Christ are not only badges or tokens of Christian men's professions, but rather they are certain signs of grace, and God's good will towards us, *by the which he doth work invisibly in us*." In "The Ministration of Baptism to Infants," on page 167, "The minister coming to the font" is directed to use a certain exhortation in which the people present are exhorted "to call upon God the Father" that "He will grant that *he* being baptized with water may also be baptized with the Holy Ghost; *be received into Christ's Holy Church*, received into the *ark of Christ's Church*." Similar language is used in administering "baptism to adults." The people are exhorted to call on God "that of His bounteous goodness He will grant to this person that which by nature he cannot have; that he being baptized with water,

may also be baptized with the Holy Ghost, and *received into Christ's Holy Church.*"

Thus, then, we have seen that Holy Baptism is the Divinely appointed way of entering the Kingdom of God. God the Holy Ghost devised it, and He never devises a mere formality. "*I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins*" is infallible truth. In this Baptism each human being is brought into unity with the *Reservoir* of Grace on earth—the one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. To conclude. Baptism is but one of the limbs of Christ's Body Mystical, by which He touches us, and grafts us into Himself. We are plucked by the Holy Ghost from the poisoned root of Adam, and, in Baptism, grafted into the New Tree—Christ—the Second Adam, according to the words: "We are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones." Eph. v., 30. And so the Tree enlarges; so His Body visible expands; so the Stone grows and becomes a great Mountain and fills the whole earth;" according as it is said, "Ye are the Body of Christ, and members in particular." 1 Cor., xii., 27. But enough has been said, based on God's Word, John Wesley, and the Book of Discipline, to convince you that I was correct in *adding* to—"all true believers in Christ belong to His Church"—"if they have been *baptized*," and that any other "theory is false and unscriptural."

LETTER No. 8.

DEAR SIR,—To continue my observations on the above tract,

Methodist—"There is not a text in the New Testament that teaches any such notion as that an unbroken succession of Episcopal ordinations is essential to a true ministry. It is a merely human invention. If you can quote one text which fairly teaches this succession dogma, I will accept it, but not without scripture proof."

Comment—We have now come to an important subject—the nature of the Christian Ministry, and the provision made for its perpetuation or succession to it. To treat the subject even very imperfectly is too great a task for a single letter to the press, which, in these busy and warlike times, must necessarily be short. However, seeing that your "one text" demand is so moderate, I shall try and make one letter suffice for the present. It is the same old question over again that is here raised. The opponents of Episcopacy assert that there is but *one* order in the Ministry, viz., priests or presbyters, and that to them belong the authority to ordain and admit to the Ministry. On the other hand, the Church declares that there have been, from the Apostles' days, *three* orders of Ministers in Christ's Church; bishops, priests and deacons. And she requires of those who officiate at her altars that they should be episcopally ordained; that is that they should be ordained by a bishop who has derived his authority from some of the bishops who went before him, in uninterrupted succession since the Apostles' days. This is the doctrine of the Apostolical Succession. This is the dividing line between the Church and modern "church" makers; so far at least as the Ministry is concerned. But which statement is well founded. In the first place the Ministry of the Tabernacle, in which we are taught to look for a prefiguration of that of the Church, consisted of three orders—the Levites, the Priests and the High Priest; that is to say, a priest charged with functions which it was lawful for none but him to discharge. Why God saw fit to have *High Priests, Priests and Levites* in the Jewish Church I cannot say. Had it pleased Him to appoint but *one* order, in that case, one order would have been enough. But in His Infinite Wisdom He saw fit to appoint *three*, so that neither *one* order nor *two* orders would have answered the end of the Priesthood. Now we should naturally expect that the Christian Ministry which took the place of this priesthood would be conformed in some degree to the ancient model—that it too would consist of *three* orders. Let us briefly see if such is the case. Our Lord appointed and sent twelve men, whom He called Apostles, as the chief Ministers in His Church. Luke vi., 13. He also sent forth the "Seventy" to preach His Word. Luke x., 1. Here then when our Lord was on earth we have *three* orders in the Ministry. *Christ*, the *Apostles*, and "*Seventy*" or Elders. Shortly before His ascension, He gave to the Apostles their great commission to go and send others—a commission that can never expire until the Church militant has done her work—"as My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you." In accordance with this

commission, the Apostles, shortly after the Ascension of the Saviour, proceeded to ordain a class of ministers which all agree in calling *Deacons*, whom they authorized to preach and baptize. Acts vi., 3-6; viii., 5, 12, 38; 1 Tim., iii., 8, 10-13. Here again appears the *threefold* ministry. The *Apostles*, "*Seventy*," and *Deacons*. Now, for all we know, *one* order of the Ministry in the Christian Church might have been as good as *three*, and it certainly would have been as good, if God had seen fit to so ordain. But since He has appointed *three orders*, therefore neither *two* nor *one* are or can be sufficient.

But how was this Ministry to be perpetuated? How did God provide for the succession to the Ministry of His Church? I answer by *Apostolic Succession*. We believe that Christ vested the authority to ordain with the Apostles, and that the Episcopate of the Catholic Church, springing out of this Apostolate, has succeeded to the same authority. That the Bishops of the Catholic Church are the successors of the Apostles. And furthermore, that there is no instance in the New Testament of mere Presbyters—second order-ordaining and admitting to the ranks of the Ministry. That the Apostles and they alone ordained seems quite clear. They ordained the seven deacons. Acts vi., 36. St. Paul and Barnabus ordained elders in *every church*. Acts xiv., 23. St. Paul ordained Timothy and thus reminds him; "Stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of *my* hands." 2 Timothy, i., 6. This is Apostolic Succession. And as St. Timothy was promoted to the Apostolic order, so was the authority given to him to ordain others to the sacred Ministry. He is directed to "lay hands suddenly on no man." 1 Timothy, v.. 22. And again, "the things which thou hast heard of Me, the same commit *thou* to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." 2 Timothy, ii., 2. Thus with his dying hand St. Paul delivers up the keys to a *successor* in his office. Call him *by what name you please*—Timothy succeeds to the prerogatives and powers of St. Paul. And he is to act henceforth "until the appearing of Jesus Christ," 1 Timothy, vi., 14; not by delegation in the place of an absent, but by succession in the place of a deceased apostle. Does this "Scripture proof fairly teach this succession dogma?" If so, will you "accept it?"

And so in the case of Titus. St. Paul writes to him: "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, and *ordain* elders in every city, as *I had appointed thee*," i., 5. If the power of ordination were lodged with the lower grade of the Ministry, why was Titus sent to Crete if any of the elders there could ordain as well as he? Or, supposing there were not enough there at first, why must he "ordain elders in *every* city?" When elders or presbyters had been ordained in a couple of cities, could not they be left to keep up the succession? No, Sir, Titus, and he alone, could ordain by right of his authority as bishop, received from St. Paul himself. But this is Apostolic Succession. Does this "Scripture proof fairly teach the notion" of the necessity of "Episcopal ordination" as being "essential to a true Ministry?"

But we are told that the apostles had no successors, the office becoming obsolete when St. John died at Ephesus; and that by some means or other the power of ordination came to be lodged with the second order—presbyters. But what are the facts? That a succession of the *first* (apostolic) order was contemplated is undeniable from the fact that, on the occasion of the first gap, that of Judas, it is said, "his *bishopric* let *another* take." Acts i., 20. Here then, on the first page of inspired ecclesiastical history, it is evident that one of the twelve *had a successor*,

Time need not be wasted in proving that St. Paul was "*an apostle* of Jesus Christ." Here then we have fourteen apostles, large as life apostles; the thirteenth succeeding to an apostle deceased, the fourteenth added as the growing exigencies of the Church required it. Then we have the "*apostle Barnabus.*" Acts xiv., 14. Let the number be now amended to fifteen. If there might be *fifteen*, why not *fifteen hundred?* The apostles without successors! Where is the Master's promise?—"Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." This was a promise made to the *apostles* and to them *only*. Examine it carefully "*unto the end of the world.*" Look at it again—"always"—*all* the days of the world unto its very end. *Not even for a day* shall your line be broken. When Christ said He would be *with them* to the end of the world, He was to be with them and their *successors*. We conclude, therefore, that the apostolic office is still in existence in this year of grace, 1885. Call this "succession dogma" a "human invention." No, Sir. God is the Author of it. God is the Preserver of it. It *cannot* fail any more than Christ's own promise can fail.

An extract or two may be added from the writings of Wesley. In 1745 Wesley wrote: "We believe it would not be right for us to administer either baptism or the Lord's Supper, unless we had a commission so to do from those bishops whom we apprehend to be in a *succession* from the apostles." Again, "We believe that the *threefold* order of ministers is not only authorized by its apostolic institution, but also by the written word." Works iii., 362. It thus appears that Wesley did *not* consider "this succession dogma" a "human invention," and that he considered "Episcopal ordination essential to a true Ministry."

In reality there is no difficulty about the "succession dogma." That a succession *of some sort* is held by your own communion as "essential to a true Ministry" is undeniably true. For no person, however good or learned, is permitted to administer the Lord's Supper except a "minister" who has been "ordained by the laying on of hands" of other "ministers." For instance, Mr. A———, the sadler, or Mr. B———, the carpenter, would not be permitted to do so. But why not? Because not "ordained." Is it not clear then that you hold a "succession" of *some sort* as essential to a true Ministry. The difference being, however, that your "succession" began with men who were without Divine authority to confer Divine authority; contrariwise, the Apostolic Succession reaches back through the ages clear to the Mount, where the Saviour said: "As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you." In short; no man can give any spiritual office to another unless he himself has received the authority so to do. The New Testament gives no countenance to the idea that the members of the Church ever *took upon themselves* the office of the Ministry, but that they always *received* it from those who had the authority to give it. To conclude. "Episcopacy is necessary because it is of Divine institution and because the Church of God has been governed in that way for upwards of 3,000 years. The high priests, priests and levites already referred to were an Episcopal order 3,500 years ago. Our Blessed Lord lived under this order, and perpetuated it in bishops, priests and deacons, being the only church government known for full 1,500 years after the Ascension." We must ever remember that the Church must be *older* than any written account of her. That in fact the Church wrote the New Testament, and that when the books containing the canon of the New Testament obtained their present fixed character, namely, about 400 years after Christ, Episcopacy was indisputably universal, and therefore must have been supposed to harmonize with it, or the Church would not

have set her seal as a "witness and keeper" to a book which condemned her practice. The world has been again and again challenged to produce one single church in all the world, which in the first, the second, the third, the fourth, the fifth, or the sixth century, was for one moment Presbyterian. But the writ has always been returned with the endorsement "it cannot be found." And this challenge I repeat in the county of Renfrew.

LETTER No. 9.

Dear Sir,—I beg to make a few more observations th'a ..eek on the above tract.

Methodist—"The theory that God deposits special grace wit'l bishops and priests, to be conveyed to others by ordination and bap ism, is erronious and unscriptural. Christ is the supreme Fountain of Gra e, and all may go directly to Him; for He is rich unto all that call upon him."

Comment—The exact meaning of the above passage seems to be somewhat doubtful. Is it your "theory" that *no* "special grace" is conveyed in "ordination" and "baptism?" If so, you but pronounce your own standards as "erronious and unscriptural," as they expressly teach such a "theory." Or, taking the two clauses in the above passage together, is it your "theory" that the clergy cannot be of any use to their flocks, and that the sacraments are not *means* of grace at all, but that all is to be transacted betwixt God and ourselves. If so, I should like to see the "Scripture proof" for such a novel "theory." That "all may go directly to Christ" is a statement I heartily endorse as far as it goes. But if God has appointed means of Grace in His Church of which means He has appointed certain of our fellow-men to be the administrators, and that He *has* done so there can be no doubt, then it is surely our bounden duty, as we value our soul's salvation, to use such means. As Wesley himself says in his sermon on "Means of Grace,"—"*according to the decision of Holy Writ, all who desire the Grace of God are to await for it in the means which he hath ordained*: in using, not in laying them aside." Works i., 139. Or, is it your wish to convey the impression that our "theory" is that "God has deposited special grace" with the *men themselves*? if so, we utterly repudiate such a "theory," it must be the product of your own imagination. But we *do* believe that—not as Mr. A. or Mr. B.—but *as bishops* and *priests* of God's church they have received Divine authority to exercise certain functions in that church, which functions it would be unlawful for any of the congregation, however holy, to perform. Let us remember the "gainsaying of Core," of which St. Jude reminds us in v. ii.

And let it be reverently asked, is "*Christ* the *supreme* Fountain of Grace?" Is not God the *Father*—the *First* Person in the Adorable Trinity—the Fountain of all Grace. And so the Catholic Creed begins, "I believe in one God the *Father*, Almighty." But how is that Grace which man needs to flow to him? Is there any Divinely appointed channel? Most certainly there is. "Starting from God the Father grace flows first into God the Son. There being no bar between His Godhead and His Manhood, owing to their unity, the Grace flows into His Manhood and fills the latter, so soon as he latter has been "made perfect" for it "by suffering." By the action of the Holy Ghost, the Body Mystical of Christ —His Church—is united to the Body Natural of Christ; and there being no bar between Christ's Man's Nature and the church Catholic, owing to their unity, the grace that is in that Man's Nature flowed forth and filled

the Catholic Church at Pentecost. And there being no bar between the baptized individual and that church, because he is one with it, the grace now flows freely into the individual. And the end and purport of all this flow of grace and life is salvation." Thus the direct road to Christ is *through* His church, with its divine ordinances, as His body. The whole may be summed up thus: "The union of God and man, begun in the person of Christ, is continued and extended in the Church, which is the Body of Christ; the Church acting through its Ministry and Sacraments."

Methodist—"This succession theory has been the cause of the priestly assumptions of Romanism. It puts human agency between man and his Maker."

Comment—As we are not now concerned with the "assumptions of Romanism" they need not be considered. It is some of the "assumptions" of Methodism that are under consideration. Your objection to the doctrine of the Priesthood because it puts a man between God and the Soul instead of encouraging each human being to come for himself to God, is not true in any full sense, unless Priests always discourage their people from saying their prayers, and so from making their wants known to God. But it is true in a partial sense, for the Church of God certainly does teach that some kinds of spiritual blessings can be had only through the channel of a commissioned order of men. God's rule, never departed from save in the case of such special revelations as He made to Abraham, Moses, and the like, is to deal with men *through* men. Take the Patriarchal Dispensation. In Genesis xiv. we read of "Melchizedek, king of Salem" a "priest of the most high God" blessed Abraham. Now if ever a man trod this earth that needed not the blessing of his fellow-men, that man was Abraham. Why should a priest interpose between God and Abraham? What need had such a man of Melchizedek's blessing? It was needed because God ordained that this Priest, King of Salem, should bless even "him that had the promises." And Abraham was the especial type of the Christian, as one who is justified by faith and embraces the promises. As to the Jewish Dispensation I need not multiply proofs that in it the principle which you condemn occupied a prominent place. God ordained that no sacrifices of any sort were lawful, except the priest assisted in some way or other in their offering. The principle is very clearly revealed in this Dispensation that God led his people to expect certain blessings through the agency of their brethren. It was *God* Himself who put "human agency between man and his maker" in the Jewish Dispensation. But you don't agree with Him. A word or two as to the Dispensation of Grace. Christ laid down this "standing between" Himself and the sinner as the great characteristic of the Ministry He appointed. The Apostles, by the direct institution of Christ, stood between Himself and His church. In sending the Apostles He assures them that they are to act in His stead, and, so far as it is possible to man, to fill His place. His commission is, "*As* my Father sent Me, even *so* send I you." This was their authority to act in all things for Him. Again, He says to them—"He that heareth you, heareth me," Luke, x. 16. Consider the miracle of the loaves. We see how Christ sets the Apostles between Himself and the multitude. He distributes the loaves to the Apostles and they to the multitude. He might have fed the multitude with His own hand, or He might by a word of power, have so sustained them that they would have needed no food till they reached home. Thus we find Christ, when visibly present, putting "human agency" between Himself and the multitude. And this miracle is a typical one, foreshadowing all ministerial agency in the church of Christ in which He Himself does all which is essential to our salvation. And this agency does not supersede

Christ's own acting or obscure His grace, but rather magnifies both. Christ commissioned His ministry to preach, to baptize, to administer the Lord's Supper, and to absolve. No man can either baptize, or administer the Lord's Supper to, or absolve himself. Therefore, if he receives any benefit through these appointments of Christ, he must submit to receive that benefit through the instrumentality or intervention of his fellow-man, and that benefit comes from the exalted Human Nature of Christ. Thus Christ Himself appointed the principle of putting "human agency between man and his Maker." But you don't agree with Him. And so it may not be so surprising fter all to find you disagreeing with the actual practice of your own communion. In the preaching of the Word, and in the administration of the Sacraments, Methodism "puts human agency between man and his Maker." And last, but not least, in the public services of the Lord's Day, Methodism delegates the prayers to one man, making him the mouth-piece of the people to such an extent as to seriously interfere with the liberty of the individual. Thus Methodism, even to a greater extent than the "succession theory" puts "human agency between man and his Maker." It seems surprising to find men condemning in others what they themselves practice to the utmost extent. But strange things do happen now and then.

LETTER NO. 10.

DEAR SIR, -I beg to continue my observations on the above tract.

Methodist—"Many of the greatest divines of your own church utterly reject it"—that is the "succession theory."

Comment—How "many" and who are they? That some of our clergy have done so I know. But I have yet to learn that they are classed with the "greatest divines" in the English church by their fellow churchmen, though, perhaps, so classed by outsiders. But let me tell you that the individual opinions of even our "greatest divines" have not the smallest authority. If we were Cranmerites, Ridleyites, or even Lightfootites, the opinion of Cranmer, Ridley, and Lightfoot would be binding upon us; but we are not. What is binding upon us are the standards which were agreed upon by common consent—the voice of the Church of England *as an organized body*—not the mere opinion of this or that divine. The teaching of the church on the matter under consideration practically rests on Art. xxiii, and the Preface to the Ordinal, to which documents you may refer if so di posed. The Church of England solemnly declares in the face of the world that from the Apostles' days to our own, the church of Christ has never known anything of a Ministry which did not consist of bishops, priests, and deacons, with authority transmitted in "unbroken succession" from the first age to our own.

Methodist—"As long as God calls and qualifies men for the ministry of Methodism, and makes their ministry the power of God unto salvation to sinners, we say to all priestly pretenders, what God hath cleansed that call not thou common or unclean."

Comment—I heartily acknowledge the working of the Spirit of God in your communion. I admit, and thank God for, the good which has often been done by your ministers, and the brilliant examples of piety which many of your people have exhibited. Though God has a regular channel in which His Grace ordinarily flows, just as the river Jordan has one only bed; yet, as "Jordan overflowed all its banks all the time of harvest," so God's Grace may overflow the channel of His own appointment. But this is not to attribute to your ministers a valid ministerial commission from our Lord. On the contrary, I do not yield to such a ministry any right or truly derived authority whatsoever. If your ministers are self appointed, or appointed by others who had no authority from Christ through His Apostles, then, manifestly, whatever of truth and holiness there may be in your communion, whatever of zeal for God and love to man, it wants the Royal Charter of incorporation given under the hand and seal of the King of kings. And now we come to consider briefly your claim——I may say your unsupported claim—that "God calls men for the ministry of Methodism." God may commission men to speak or act in His name in one of two ways, *mediately* or *immediately*. In which of these ways were the "men for the ministry of Methodism" commiss-

ioned to administer Christ's sacraments? If *immediately*—by God's own mouth—then the men must have received from God the power of working miracles, or of foretelling future events, so that mankind might certainly *know* that He had called them. Such has been God's invariable method. But there is no evidence that your ministers ever received any such powers. Therefore, God never called them *immediately*—by His own voice from Heaven. The only other remaining way in which it is possible to receive a divine commission to minister in Holy Things is *mediately*. If it be *mediately* then the person is commissiond by some person who is *authorized* to transmit the ministerial office. As it is said in Heb. v. 4., "No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." How was Aaron called? He was called by the mouth of Moses, an *authorized* minister of God: so that,to be called by an authorized minister, is to be "called of God." And—let it be said tenderly and courteously, yet plainly—this is precisely what the Methodists have not got—your ministers have not been "called of God *as was Aaron*"—by one authorized to call them.

Methodism dates from John Wesley. He was the founder of Wesleyan Methodism which has developed into the "Methodist Church of Canada." But who was John Wesley? And what office did he hold in God's church? He was a *priest* of the English church. As such he had no authority whatever to admit to the ministry. He never received the authority to ordain others, and he could not impart to others what he had never himself received. It may be useful to consult the writings of the founder of Methodism—the first Methodist—to see how he regarded the men he appointed to preach—whether he regarded them simply as lay-preachers or as duly ordained men with power to administer the sacraments of Christ. Wesley has written much on this matter, but a few extracts from his sermon on the "Ministerial Office" must here suffce. This sermon is founded on Heb. v. 4, the text being "no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." This celebrated sermon was written by Wesley while at Cork, in 1789. It was preached not only before his Conference in Ireland, but also before that of England. And he finally published it in the "Armenian Magazine" of 1790 in the two parts of May and June, nine and ten months before he died, and consequently many years after his "conversion."

Thomas Maxwell and others had offered to serve as "Sons in the Gospel," and Wesley called attention to the terms of their commission in these words: "He received them wholely and solely to preach, not to administer sacraments." Works ii. 541.

"In 1744 all the Methodist preachers had their first conference. But none of them dreamed, that the being called to preach gave them any right to administer sacraments. And when that question was proposed, 'In what light are we to consider ourselves'? it was answered, 'as *extraordinary* messengers, raised up to provoke the *ordinary* ones to jealousy?' In order hereto, one of our first rules was given to each preacher, 'you are to do *that part* of the work which we appoint.' But *what work* was that? Did we ever appoint you to administer sacraments; to exercise the priestly office? Such a design never entered into our mind; it was the farthest from our thoughts; and if any preacher had taken such a step, we should have looked upon it as a palpable breach of this rule, and consequently as a recantation of our connection.....and in doing it you renounce the first principle of Methodism, which was wholely and solely to preach the Gospel." Id. 542

"I wish you would seriously consider what has been said. And particularly you whom God hath commissioned to call sinners to repentance. It does by no means follow from hence, that ye are commissioned to baptize, or to administer the Lord's Supper. Ye never dreamed of this for ten or twenty years after ye began to preach. Ye did not then, like Korah, Dathan and Abiram, 'seek the priesthood also.' Ye knew no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. O contain yourselves within your own bounds; be content with preaching the Gospel.....In God's name stop there!" Id. 543. 544. Space forbids extending the quotations. But surely such words from the venerated founder of Methodism must strike shame into the heart of many a "Reverend" Wesleyan preacher as he presumes to lay hands on the priestly office, and to "administer the sacrament" with the solemn warning of the first Methodist ringing in his ear.

In conclusion I must call your attention to the fact—for it is not as well known as it deserves to be—that the Methodist body in England up to 1836, had no kind of ordination whatever. Up to that date they had abided by the principle laid down by the Conference of 1793. "We have never sanctioned ordination in England, either in this conference or in any other; in any degree, or ever attempted to do it." In 1836 Conference declared that, "the Wesleyan Body had departed from Scripture, from the usages of antiquity, and from the universal practice of the churches, and that the conduct of the Apostles acting under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit ought to be followed; and so, after much discussion, and many ill-timed allusions to Mr. Charles Wesley's famous lines, Ordination was voted back again." Smith's History of Methodism, vol. 3, p. 261-2

But were the ordainers of 1836 even Presbyters? The rite was performed by the President, the ex-President, and the Secretary for the time being who had themselves received no kind of ordination with "laying on of hands" from any body whatever, whether Episcopal or Presbyterian. They were in fact but *laymen*. As Tyerman, himself a Methodist, records a preacher saying: "Ordination among Methodists! amazing indeed! Surely it never began in the midst of a multitude of counsellors; and I greatly fear, the Son of Man was not Secretary of State, or not present, when the business was brought on and carried.....years to come will speak in groans of the opprobrious anniversary of our religious madness for gowns and bands." And another—"I wish they had been asleep when they began this business of ordination; it is neither Episcopal nor Presbyterian; but a mere hodge-podge of inconsistencies."—Vol. 3, 439.

The question may now be asked—who are the "*priestly pretenders*?" Unless you can show that your "ministry" has been "called of God, *as was Aaron*," as enunciated in the 5th Chapter of the Hebrews, to do what your own founder has assured you was "ever the peculiar honor of the priesthood," viz: to celebrate the sacrament of the Lord's Supper—the answer is not far to seek.

LETTER NO. 11.

DEAR SIR. -I desire to make a few more observations this week on the above tract.

Methodist,—"Unity of faith and spirit is essential to a true church, but there is no scriptural authority for the Romish dogma, that corporate unity is an essential thing."

Comment,—I fear you have made but poor use of your Bible.

The unity contemplated by our Lord was not merely one of "faith and spirit"—an invisible unity, one alone visible to God—but the unity of a "corporate" body, the unity of an organized society—a unity visible *to the world.*

Read the prayer offered up by our Saviour on "the night in which He was betrayed": "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in Us: *that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me.* And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be one, even as We are one: I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and *that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me,* and hast loved them as Thou hast loved Me." John xvii. See how near and dear unity was to the heart of the Saviour. Mark the recurrence of the petition—"That they all may be one." And why did He thus pray for unity? Why, but "*that the world*" might not only "*believe*" but "*know*" that He had been sent by the Father. It must be manifest to any candid mind that our Lord prayed not merely for an "invisible" unity, for that "the world" *could not see.* He prayed for an outward, visible, "corporate" unity which alone "the world" *could see.* Think you the Lord prayed *not* for "an essential thing" at such an awful time! Can you honestly believe that our Lord prayed for the unity of the spirit only, and not for the unity of the body as well. Yet this is the doctrine by which you would vindicate the sin of having separated yourself from the body of Christ, and wounded your Saviour in the house of His friends. O how you trample on that prayer in very scorn and mockery! You would destroy and cast away the divinely appointed and ordained evidence of the Gospel's Truth, the chosen evidence of the Lord, visible, tangible to men forever.

It were as reasonable to talk of *invisible* sacraments, of an *invisible* ministry, of an *invisible* resurrection, as to talk of an "*invisible*" church. Your "invisible" theory is but an *afterthought*—a *makeshift*, a "human invention," "got up" by men, who, finding only one church in the New Testament, and finding a hundred or more of bodies each claiming to be that One church about them, and not being able to meet those two facts in a manly, straightforward way, have tried to reconcile them by a *theory*, an invention for the purpose. But the Scriptures know nothing of such a

"theory." The New Testament represents the Church as a *visible*, organized body, made up of good and bad members—wheat and tares; good fishes and bad; foolish virgins and wise; living branches and withered, of the true Vine. As there is but "One Spirit" so there is but "*One Body.*" Eph. iv., 4. The Body is one, and so is the Church. Christ never founded but *one* church.

"Tell it unto the Church," says our Lord. How can you "tell it" to an "*invisible*" community? How can a man be "cast out" of an "*invisible*" church? If he be a good man, he still belongs to your "invisible" church as much as before, and if he be a bad man, you cannot cast him out, because he never belonged to it at all. It would appear impossible to doubt that throughout the days of the New Testament there was "one body," known as the Church of God—that there was "one Body" guided by "One Spirit," "One Fold" fed by "One Shepherd."

But more. This outward, visible, "corporate unity" is no mere supposition. *It has existed.* In Apostolic days the world *saw* the divinely chosen evidence of the Gospel's Truth—the Oneness of Christ's followers —spread abroad before its eyes, and in the conversion of thousands, the power of that evidence was displayed. The One Church, small and weak, oppressed and persecuted, but still the one Church, bore aloft the banner of the Cross victoriously, and planted it at last on the proudest height in all the world, the "Mount of the Capitol." The battle cry of "One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism," conquered in every field. So stood the church for at least three centuries. She wore one grand unbroken front before an astonished world. Grand, yes, grand it is to look back to that vast army marching on in brotherly love, men of all colors, tongues, and climes, marching shoulder to shoulder, under one banner and one Lord, to trample into dust the idols of the ancient earth. They had the Lord's own chosen evidence, they were one. Then tribes came together, and nations turned as one man.

And what has existed, we may hope, will exist again. It is for this reason that the two great societies exist within the Church of England:— one for reunion with the Eastern churches, the other for the reunion of Christendom generally.

The principle of "Corporate unity," though denounced for many years by the Methodists, has at last been acknowledged as an "essential" thing; for at some cost to all parties concerned, the various Methodist bodies in Canada have united, so that instead of having several "Methodist churches," we have *one*—"The Methodist Church of Canada." I do not think your brethren will thank you for saying that *such* "corporate unity" is *non*-"essential" and "Romish." And can any one more effectually help Romanism than by calling a scriptural principle—one of the marks of Christ's church—"Romish."

Methodist,—"The only bond of unity between the apostolic churches was submission to apostolic authority, and a common experience of salvation by faith in Christ."

Comment,—And as a consequence of yielding "submission to apostolic authority" the members of the "apostolic churches" "continued steadfastly," not in the "Apostles' doctrine" only, but in their "*fellowship*" also. Now the plain meaning of this is that the early christians did not split up into several independent bodies, but all continued in the same society, which was under the direction and Government of the Apostles.

Thus the very "bond of unity" which you concede must have included that very outward, *visible*, "corporate unity" which you only a moment ago denounced as "Romish" and "unscriptural."

But "submission to apostolic authority" is just as necessary in the nineteenth century as it was in the first—in "Apostolic days." Yet this is precisely what your communion utterly rejects, it submits to no ecclesiastical authority whatever save its own, which is *not* "apostolic." Your communion does not "continue in the *Apostolic fellowship*," but has created a new fellowship of its own which is certainly wanting in "apostolic authority."

Consider how St. Paul wrote so sternly of those who would separate themselves from the one body—the "Apostles' fellowship":—"Now I beseech you brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them." Rom. xvi. 17. Or, again, that he should beseech the Corinthians "that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you," 1 Cor. i. 10, for "is Christ divided" he asks indignantly. Yes, schism, or division was in his eyes a great sin; but your "*invisible* church" theory evacuates such passages as the above of their meaning, for it makes schism *an impossible sin.*

LETTER NO. 12.

Dear Sir,—I fully expected to have concluded my reply to the above tract ere this, but so many points demanded attention, my progress has been unavoidably slow. However, as most of the strongest points in the document have been dealt with and disposed of, I shall conclude my observations as speedily as possible, as I do not wish to weary the patience of the reader.

Methodist,—"The Methodists everywhere preach the same truths, and are really one."

Comment,—This is a mere boast, and I may say of your statement, as the Irish Conference said of Wesley's reason for "consecrating" Coke, —"it is more easily assumed than proved," which, by the way shows that Methodists differ at least on the subject of the ministry. To the unreflecting mind, it is misleading to speak of the many Methodist bodies under their common name of "Methodist." The unthinking are thus led to conclude that this "family" is pervaded throughout by the utmost harmony.

Do you seriously wish your readers to believe that the *ten* "Methodist churches" in the United States "are really one?" If they be "*really one*" and hold "the same truths," how is it that these ten bodies are separate and distinct, as much so as Methodists are distinct and separate from Baptists? How is it that they are very often hostile towards each other, and in many instances two or three of them are laboring in the same field? So long as they remain "really" *divided*, it will be difficult to persuade people that they "are really one." The same may be said of the Methodists of England and Ireland, but I must hurry on.

Methodist,—"If unity is the mark of a true church, so much the worse for your church.....instead of unity you have evangelical Calvanism, skeptical Rationalism, and Romish Ritualism, all taught by her ministers. The less you say about unity the better; for you have no real unity to show."

Comment,—By having omitted to give some clear statement as to the meaning of "*evangelical* Calvinism," "*skeptical* Rationalism," and "*Romish* Ritualism," your readers have missed a treat. I, for one, and I am serious in what I am about to say, should like to have my understanding enlightened by some clear definition of these three things. But this need not be dwelt upon.

That a sprinkling of persons may be found within the pale of the Church of England who have more affinity for and sympathy with Romanism, Puritanism, or Rationalism, than with the actual standards of their nominal communion appears to inevitably follow from the fact that she is more completely a microcosm of all contemporary religious

thought than any other communion. But these exhibitions of disloyalty are unimportant, both in respect of the numbers concerned and of their influence. No Roman, Dissenting, or Agnostic nibbling at the Church of England from within counts for much in the long run. Her children cannot mould her; she trains and alters them. Her children cannot make her what they want: in the long run she makes them what she wants.

But, Sir, do you demand as essential to "unity" that every man's mind shall be cast in the same mould? That the large body of clergy and laity in the Anglican church should not vary in religious opinion? Was it so in Apostolic days? Were there no disputes and differences among Apostles, holy men who nevertheless knelt at the same altar and offered united worship to the same Lord? Were there no differences between St. Paul and St. Peter touching questions of the law?

Can you deny that we have "real" substantial "unity to show" when we can point to the fact that 30,000 clergy and about 20,000,000 laity repeat the same creed, accept the same ministry, worship the same God, use substantially the same Liturgy, and gather round the same altars? Though holding "the faith once delivered" some may give more prominence to one portion of the truth and some to another. The Book of Common Prayer is received by all, clergy and laity, just as a vast multitude may admire a fair picture, though some may be struck with this beauty, others with that. Notwithstanding a ripple on her surface here and there, I am satisfied that more "real unity" exists in the Anglican communion to-day than in any other body.

Her Catholics, her Highs, her Lows, and her Broads, are being brought face to face in various ways, as for instance in Church Congresses, and are beginning to understand each other more and more and consequently are becoming more and more united.

"Outside the Creed, outside the fundamentals of truth, outside the essentials of salvation, the church allows a region where mental activity can reverently play, where each one can reason on those non-essentials, which are not without their importance, where each can investigate, form theories and discuss. But at the same time we are all in "one Body," we are all in one System, in the centre of which stands, as a sun, the Creed with the essentials of Truth." We have, therefore, Organic Unity in diversity. Contrariwise, Methodism has diversity without Organic Unity.

Indeed the fact that the Anglican church is comprehensive enough to hold the great variety of religious opinion as undoubtedly exists within her, serves in a measure to prove that she is not *man*-made but *God*-made; that she is in truth an integral portion of God's church, His Mystical Body, which God intended to embrace *all mankind.*

Methodist,—"I ask your special attention to a few facts.

Fact 1. "We do not hold that John Wesley was infallible, and that we are bound to think as he thought on all points."

Comment,—This is merely a confession of the fact that Modern Methodism is not Wesleyan Methodism.

Fact 2. "Wesley repeatedly admitted that there were unanswerable arguments in favor of complete separation from the church."

Comment,—Until clear testimony is produced to support this "fact," I must decline to accept it. In 1789 Wesley wrote: "The Methodists are still members of the church; such they desire to live and die. And I believe, one reason why God is pleased to continue my life so long is, to *confirm* them in their present purpose, *not to separate from the church.*" Works ii., 542.

And how can you reconcile your "fact" with the weighty words that occur in Wesley's letter to Samuel Bardsley, dated March 25th, 1787,—that "when the Methodists leave the Church of England, God will leave them." Id. vii., 132.

The columns of the STANDARD might easily be filled with quotations to the same effect. But the above in addition to those quoted in a previous letter may well suffice to overthrow your No. 2 "fact," so-called.

Fact 3. "I admit that he counselled his people to remain connected with the church; but he could not have meant by this what High churchmen assume he meant; because he organized the Methodist connexion independent of, and separate from the Church of England."

Comment,—How could "he *counsel* his people to *remain*, &c.," and at the same time "repeatedly admit that there were *unanswerable* arguments" against his doing so? Have more respect for your venerated founder's consistency than that. You assume that Wesley was not a High Churchman. What is the fact? In his letter to Lord North written in 1775, when he was 72 years old, he says: "I am a *High Churchman*, the son of a High Churchman." Smith's vol. 1., 700. A few words from Wesley's own pen will settle your assertion as to his having "organized the Methodist Connexion, independent of and separate, &c." His "Large Minutes" contain the plan of discipline as practised in the Methodist Connexion during his lifetime. I now quote from a copy which bears the date of 1791—the year in which he died. Amongst much more to the same effect, occurs the following. Here is one of the questions put to every candidate for admission as a "preacher." "Do you constantly attend *church and Sacrament?*" Q. 41. How should an assistant be qualified for his charge?" A. By..loving the church, and resolving *not to separate from it.* Let this be well observed."

Fact 4. "It is true that Wesley was ordained by an English bishop and never was expelled; but he really separated from the church, as Lord Mansfield and his brother Charles maintained, when he ordained, preachers to administer the sacraments, apart from the church."

Comment,—That some of the preachers did "administer the sacraments" is true, but that they did so on Wesley's own authority, I very much doubt. In his sermon on Heb. v., preached shortly before his death, Wesley says: "It was several years after our society was formed before any attempt of this kind was made. The first was at Norwich. One of our preachers yielded to the importunity of the people and baptized their children, but as soon as it was known, he was informed it must not be, unless he designed to leave our Connexion. He promised to do so no more, and I suppose he kept his promise." Thus, at the end of his life we find him denouncing what you claim he authorized the men to do.

Fact 5. "It was Wesley himself who provided, in his famous Deed, that Methodism should be forever independent of the Church of England."

Comment,—But no title deed of Methodism prescribes or even contemplates secession from the National church, the entire machinery being so ingeniously framed as to admit of conformity. His "famous Deed" no where essays to form a distinct sect. Search and see. And imagine a church without sacraments, for they are not provided for in his Deed.

Fact 6. "A large proportion of those who became Methodists never belonged to the Church of England."

Comment,—Everybody knows that fact. But what does it prove? that he founded a church? Nothing of the sort. It *means* that he was willing to do all he could for the spiritual welfare of all who sought his help, whatever their sect or creed.

Fact 7. "Methodism never had any organic connection with the Church of England, and could not, as a body separate from it."

Comment,—Sir, you talk in your sleep. No man could talk thus, if he had his eyes open and his understanding about him. Enough has already been quoted to turn this so-called fact inside out. Why, sir, Methodism was *cradled* in the Church of England—was a society *within* her. If you have any doubts on this point after reading all that has been said, there remains sufficient ammunition to explode them.

Fact 8. "Wesley's fears about the bad results of separation have been shown to be a mistake, by the wonderful spiritual success of Methodism since his death."

Comment,—Knox, the intimate friend and admirer of Wesley, writes: "I am not inclined to believe that the activities of the modern English Methodists are so *directly spiritual* as those of their predecessors; nor, I must think, is the animative spirit of the general system by any means what it was. It altered even during Mr. Wesley's life." Vol. i., 76. There is no doubt that Methodism has prospered. Men have marvelled at such sectarian growth. But the "wonderful *spiritual* success" was accomplished when the Wesleyan magazine published portraits of the ministers of the body and issued each one as Mr. So and So, preacher of the Gospel. In those days the noble workers were indeed one with the church Catholic. They would not recognize the Methodism of to-day as their idea of Methodism, for its spiritual unction has gone, as it is fast becoming very worldly.

I do not hesitate to tell you that your "success" was achieved when the Church of England was almost *fast asleep*. But during the last fifty years she has awaked out of that sleep, and is fast making up for lost time. And Methodism is beginning to *feel*—nay, *has already felt*—that it is *declining*, being utterly unable to compete with the Church of England. Your own men are my witnesses. During a discussion in the Methodist Conference of 1880, held in London, England, on the *yearly decrease* of Methodism, Dr. Rigg stated: "I believe further, that the main reason of our want of increase is that other ministers have multiplied, who are doing the work of preaching and pastoral visitation in a measure and with a power unexampled. Of course we cannot wish that there should be less zeal in the church.....it is harder to fight to-day than it was thirty years ago. Then we could go and preach, and we had no competition, and wherever we went our chapels would be filled. Now we have clergymen who are pastors, among the people, with their lay agents to help them at every turn: and unless there is an amount of steady pastoral

visitations, and influences far greater than, so to speak, seemed to be necessary in the times of our fathers, we cannot expect very greatly to change our present results."

Another witness, Dr. Osborn: "I desire to express my entire sympathy with many of the remarks of Dr. Rigg. It has been said that *our harvest was when the church was fast asleep* and the Dissenters were all nodding; but *now the church is wide awake.* I have no hesitation in saying that I do not believe there ever was such a revival of religion as that of which the Established church of this country has been the subject during the last half century....., there is nothing in ecclesiastical history that can be put side by side with it."

Another witness, Dr. Pope: "Their spirit towards the church was reverential.....the Church of England had the richest theology in Christendom. He anticipated a *great future for the church*, which, as they all knew, *had a profound hold of the English people just now.*" However tempting to quote much more I forbear. The same story may be told of the United States. A couple of years ago, I read of one of the *Methodist* organs lamenting over the fact that nearly 300,000 souls annually drift away from Methodism and find their way into the Anglican church. And there is already a movement in the same direction in Canada. Our own Bishop——the Bishop of Ontario——has no less than *ten* applications in his hands at this present time from leading Methodist preachers for Holy Orders. And there is hardly a Canadian Bishop but has practically the same story to tell. But my hand is tired. I stop.

So much for your "*eight facts.*" If there be any "force" or "fairness" in them now, you are welcome to either or both.

LETTER NO. 13.

DEAR SIR,—I desire to continue my observations on the above tract.

Methodist,—"Wesley's sermons are in our course of study for young ministers; and all the distinguishing doctrines of Methodism are faithfully preached among us."

Comment,—Yes, to the extent of "fifty-two," which do not include his sermons "on attending the church's service" and "the ministerial office," both of which are condemnatory of modern Methodism.

"Baptism," according to your own xvii. Article is spoken of as "a sign of Regeneration." Is that doctrine—though not a "distinguishing" one—"of Methodism," faithfully preached among you? Is "Fasting or Abstinence" as an "ordinance of God" faithfully preached? B. of D., 24.

Methodist,—"Wesley never formally renounced the doubtful opinions of his early years; but he made a selection out of his works of certain sermons, as expressing his matured views, to be a standard of doctrine among his people."

Comment,—As if he had virtually done so; when you know, or might know, that towards the close of his life he re-affirmed his early belief about baptism. Here are the facts. "Conversion," 1738; Treatise on Baptism, 1756; republished by Wesley himself in 1773. That is, 35 years after his "conversion, and but 18 years before his death in 1791. Tyerman records Wesley as saying in 1778 when 75 years old: "Forty years ago, I knew and preached every Christian doctrine *which I preach now.*" Vol. iii., 275.

And in saying that Wesley's "sermons *alone* have authority," you contradict the B. of D. which enumerates additional "standards," viz: Wesley's "notes on the N. T." and the "twenty-five articles."

Methodist—"Among these there is a sermon on the New Birth, in which, though admitting the teaching of the church as to the regeneration of infants in baptism, instead of speaking of baptism as the means of regenerating the unregenerate, he really combats and rejects this dogma."

Comment,—If he admitted "the regeneration of infants in baptism," then he "spoke of baptism as a means of regenerating the unregenerate" because *un*baptized infants are "*unregenerate.*" Thus in one breath you represent Wesley as believing that "baptism is the means of regenerating the unregenerate," while in the next as "combatting and rejecting" this belief. Too great a desire to range Wesley on your side has played havoc with your *logical* (?) powers in this instance. And to contend that you used the word "unregenerate" as synonymous with *adult* would be

doing Wesley a cruel injustice, for then you would represent him as holding *two* baptisms—one conveying "regeneration to infants," the other conveying I know not what to adults. But a word as to the sermon. I must express my regret with your unfair mode of dealing with this sermon. Quoting a line here and there that, taken by itself, favors your contention, you utterly ignore some important passages which give a different turn to what you do quote. Now, if you had produced alongside of the words you have quoted such a passage as this: "But perhaps the sinner himself, to whom in real charity we say, 'you must be born again,' has been taught to say, 'I defy your new doctrines; I need not be born again; I was born again when I was baptized. What! would you have me deny my baptism?' I answer first, there is nothing under Heaven which can excuse a lie; otherwise I should say to an open sinner, *if you have been baptized, do not own it. For how highly does this aggravate your fault! How will it increase your damnation!*"—Your readers would have a clearer idea of Wesley's meaning. Taking the sermon as a whole he is simply pointing out the very doctrine that every churchman holds on baptism, viz: that like every other blessing and privilege, it only increases the condemnation of those who *abuse* it. But then this sermon proves that Wesley regarded baptism as an awful *reality*, and not as a meaningless ceremony.

But in order that justice may be done to Wesley, I shall produce a few extracts from his "Treatise on Baptism" which prove beyond doubt that he firmly held the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration. And when a man writes a treatise on a subject, you may expect to find in such a work his matured and carefully weighed opinions. He says: "By Baptism we, who were by nature children of wrath, are made children of God. And this *regeneration*, which our church in so many places ascribes to baptism, is more than barely being admitted into the church, though commonly connected therewith; being grafted into the Body of Christ's Church we are made the children of God by adoption and grace. *By water, then, as a means*, the water of Baptism, we are *regenerated or born again*; whence it is also called by the Apostle 'the washing of regeneration.'"

"What are the *benefits* we receive by baptism? The first of these is the washing away of original sin by the application of the merits of Christ's death."

"He gave Himself for the Church that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, namely, in Baptism, *the ordinary instrument of our justification.*"

"As many as are baptized into Christ, in His name, *have* thereby put on Christ—that is, are mystically *united* to Christ, and made *one* with Him."

"*Baptism doth now save us,* if we live answerable thereto; if we repent, believe, and obey the Gospel; supposing this, as it admits us into the Church here, so into glory hereafter."

On February 5, 1760, he writes: "I baptized a gentlewoman at the Foundry; and the peace she *immediately* found was a fresh proof that the outward sign, duly received, is *always* accompanied with the inward grace."

Lastly, listen to what Wesley says in his notes on the N.T., according to which your preachers are pledged to teach. In commenting on Acts xxii. 16—"Be baptized and wash away thy sins"—he says: "Baptism administered to real penitents is both a *means* and seal of pardon. Nor did God ordinarily in the primitive church *bestow this on any*, unless through this means."

The above evidence is sufficient to prove that Wesley really held the doctrine of Baptismal regeneration, and agreed with the teaching of the Church of England. So that to vary slightly your conclusion on the "New Birth" sermon, this evidence does "show that Wesley in his teaching practically" *held* "what in theory he seemed to admit."

I may now leave it to the reader to estimate the value of your answer to the statement put into the mouth of "Episcopalian" viz: "that modern Methodists have departed from Wesley's doctrines, especially in regard to baptismal regeneration," and to which you replied—"*there is no truth in this.*"

Methodist.—"But no matter who has taught this dogma, I hold that it is a dangerous heresy, leading thousands to trust in their baptism, while they are guilty and unregenerate sinners."

Comment.—This is a dreadful accusation to bring against, not only the Church of England, not only your own venerated founder, John Wesley, not only against Methodism itself, but, my dear sir, it is an accusation against the Scriptures, and the All Holy God Who inspired those Scriptures. God, the Holy Ghost, inspired St. Paul to write: "*He saved us by the washing of Regeneration.*" Titus iii, 5. If you believe *this* "Scripture is given by inspiration of God" then I beg of you to withdraw your dreadful accusation. It seems to me nothing less than profanity itself. For, what else have you said than that God inspired St. Paul to teach us a "dangerous heresy." Your words—"*no matter who*"—seem to admit of no exception, not even God Himself. I can hardly believe you *meant* to go so far though there is no mistaking your words.

As already pointed out, your own xvii. Article speaks of baptism as "a sign of *regeneration.*" Therefore, according to your dictum "The Methodist Church of Canada" teaches "a dangerous heresy."

The Wesleyan Society in England up to a couple of years ago, taught the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration in its Baptismal office. So that according to your dictum, Methodist preachers have for long, long years been subscribing to "a dangerous heresy." But more. The conference, "wisely"—as the "Methodist Recorder" puts it, has made the use of the new "form" optional, nay, it has gone so far as to permit the use of the "Form" used in the Baptismal Service of the Church of England. So that at this moment the preachers have the *privilege* of using a "form" which admittedly teaches the "dangerous heresy."

But a word as to the alleged "dangerous" tendency of the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration. If those who preach the church's doctrine were in the habit of asserting or implying in their teaching, in the teeth of all Scripture, that a man *once* in grace is *always* in grace, there might be some ground for your charge, "that it leads thousands to trust in their baptism, while they are guilty and unregenerate sinners." But if they say that baptism brings a man into a state of salvation, which state has to be "worked out with fear and trembling"; if they tell him that,

though grafted into Christ in Baptism, he must *abide in Him*, or be in danger of being cast forth by the Almighty Husbandman as a withered branch—if, I say, they do this, I do not see but that they are free "from the blood of all men." But I go further, and say, that if the Apostolic mode of speaking is to be any rule for the church in this age, then none but those who habitually address *all their baptized hearers as answerable for grace* given, can be free from their blood. The Apostle St. Paul held all the persons addressed as responsible for grace already bestowed, at some definite past time; and *that time* the word of God indicates to be the time of their baptism.

Methodist,—"Some undoubtedly have done so. But many Episcopalians have also become Methodists."

Comment,—The above forms a part of your reply to "Episcopalian's" statement that "you cannot deny that many of your ministers and members have joined our church, and renounced Methodism."

I grant that "many Episcopalian" *laymen* have in times past, "become Methodists," but I absolutely deny it in respect of the *clergy*. Can you name half a dozen of our clergy who have become Methodists during the last 25 years? Can you even name *one?* I never remember reading or hearing of any of our clergy leaving us for *Methodism*. Such *may* have happened, but the instances are fortunately "few and far between." And as to laymen, the leakage from the Church to Methodism is well nigh stopped. The Church of England is year by year ceasing more and more to be "the happy hunting ground" she once was for Methodism. Thanks to the great Catholic revival within the church now in progress for half a century. We have, clergy and laity, found out that we have all we require *at home*, and need not go in pursuit of it elsewhere.

Methodist,—"There is a difference, however, when an Episcopalian becomes a Methodist, it is almost always because he has been converted, and found spiritual help among the Methodists."

Comment,—That may be, but, as perhaps in your own case, "it is almost always because" they have not *used* the "spiritual help" to be found in their own "Household." And not a few have "become Methodists" for apparently no other consideration than the "weaker sex."

But be not startled if I tell you that the Church of England is Methodist, for she too has revivals, which she calls "Missions," and, in her "after prayer meetings," her children have the privilege of using freedom of spiritual intercourse, mutual encouraging words, and even extemporary prayer. "But there is a difference however." She does not trust the new life in the soul to the storms of feeling only, for the development of its fibre; she acts on the principle that if to live one must breathe, so also one must have the solid food of life—even the "Bread of life."

LETTER NO. 14.

DEAR SIR,—I beg to conclude my observations on the above tract.

Methodist,—"When Methodists become Episcopalians, it is generally because they have lost religious life, and want to get into a church where they can dance, play cards, and attend the theatre, and have the credit of being church members."

Comment,—I do not see how these three amusements necessarily involve any moral or spiritual deterioration *when indulged in under proper restriction.* I do not see how indulgence in a game of cards at home, or in a private dance with proper company, or attendance at a theatre when proper plays and proper actors only may be seen, must necessarily lead to a "loss of religious life." There is, no doubt, a danger of amusements of *any kind* being made so engrossing as to interfere with holier things, but when *properly pursued*, they may aid the christian life. Even the popular games of chess and draughts, innocent in themselves, may be *abused.* But I do not propose discussing amusements. I simply affirm that the English church neither admits men to her fold nor to the Holy Communion lightly, hastily, and with little scrutiny, as ten minutes reading of her Prayer Book will testify. And further, that the standard of practical religion appears to be at least as high in the Church as in Methodism. Finally that there must be some other reasons than those you name for "Methodists becoming Episcopalians" as it is a well known fact that Methodists themselves, "dance, play cards, and attend theatres," and indulge in other amusements besides, yet all the while "have the credit of being church members." So that your objection to the church comes from one of those who "understand neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm."

Methodist,—"Many of your ministers seem more anxious to proselyte members of other churches, than to lead the worldly and unconverted members of their own church to a saving knowledge of Christ."

Comment,—Experience has proved that the clergyman who is careless of his own flock is generally too indolent to attempt to "proselyte members of other churches." The real *aggressive* work is done by the men who are most "anxious" about their own people.

But the clergyman who rests perfectly contented with retaining the allegiance of his own people appears to me to fall short in the performance of his duty. The clergy are bound to extend the limits of the church in every direction; they are not justified in leaving outsiders to remain outside, but are bound to endeavour to bring them in. They must, in the words of the Gospel, go out into the streets and lanes, to the hedges and by-ways, and compel men to come in. But when done by the old church this work is not commendable! Nevertheless whatever measure of success Methodism has attained, it must be largely set down to its

aggressiveness coupled with the indifference of the church. But now that the latter has "buckled on her armour" and become aggressive, working with unexampled success, she is made the subject of attack.

But notwithstanding these attacks she evidently intends boldly and fearlessly asserting and maintaining her position, seeking occasion to tell the worth of her grand inheritance to every listening ear. It has been too long the fashion to speak of her claims with bated breath, for fear of giving offence to others! But this semi-apologizing attitude is happily giving place to a more courageous one even to the proclaiming of her principles from "the house top." But, much as has been done, far more remains to be done, and only continued aggressiveness can do it.

Methodist,—"I have never known a Methodist minister to go to your church from conviction about doctrine or discipline. It is commonly because men of small talents are more in demand, and get a better position in your church than they could get in the Methodist church; sometimes for less worthy reasons."

Comment,—This is a severe judgment to pass on the vast majority of the men who have come from Methodism into the Church. The reverse of what you say is much nearer to the truth. However, it is quite possible that a few have come over from motives other than "conviction," as we have been "bitten" occasionally.

But it is not your men of "small talents" that "commonly" find their way into the English church, as such have little hope of passing even the examination for Deacon's orders without previous special reading in addition to the *Divinity* course. I have but little doubt if such men as Dr. Osborn chanced to see your statement they would condemn it in unmeasured terms. This aged and influential preacher joined the English church two years ago. But he could not have left Methodism because of "small talents" or to "better his position," as he was a President of one of the four Methodist colleges in England. And I hope this hoary headed man may be excepted from the "less worthy reason" motive.

A couple of years ago one of your organs in England—the *Methodist*—said: "The list of ministerial resignations is longer this year than usual. Various causes have operated to lead men to retire from our church. These causes in nearly all cases are *doctrine* or *administration*, and not moral. Two have been touched with High church views.....we refer to I. P. Napier, B. A., and J. Stephenson, M. A. They are men of *ability*, *culture*, and *experience*, and we regret their loss. Several young men have resigned because the prospect of employment is uncertain." This paper knows better than to attribute your "ministerial resignations" as "commonly" due to the reasons you name or even to "less worthy" ones whatever they are; but it frankly sets down the causes as being those you "have never known," namely, "doctrine or administration."

But a word as to the clergy of "small talents" in the English church as compared with the "Methodist ministry." I may at once admit that among your men may be found some learned preachers, but when you say that the clergy of the English church are *less* learned as a body than your own "ministry," one does not know whether to smile at or to pity such a glaring want of knowledge of the actual facts.

It would be interesting, had I the time, to compare the literature produced by your preachers with even a tithe of that produced by the clergy. Have you produced anything that can take the place of or compare with "Pearson on the Creed," "Buttler's Analogy," Farrar's "Christian Ministry," Wordsworth's "Greek Testament," Westcott's "Textual Criticism," Pusey on "the Minor Prophets," Pusey's "Devotional Library," not to name a few of the voluminous writings of Liddon, Littledale, Blunt, Sadler, and a thousand and one others whose writings are educating most of the English speaking race.

But more. When you want "Theology" for the "Preliminary" course of study for your "candidates," where do you get it but in the writings of a *Church of England* divine, that is, "John Wesley's sermons." And no "*notes on the New Testament*" are of binding obligation on your preachers save those of the above named Church of England divine. Again, when you want a clear, full, and reliable exposition of the Creed of Christendom for your candidates of the "third year's course," you have to dig for it in a *Church of England mine*, namely, "Pearson on the Creed." I will conclude with the opinions of a few outsiders. Your own Dr. Pope said at the Conference at Hull, in 1880, that "*the Church of England* had the *richest theology* in Christendom." The celebrated Dr. Chalmers, of Scotland, once said: "To the English Church, the theological literature of our nation stands indebted for her best acquisitions. And we hold it a refreshing spectacle, at any time that meagre Socianianisn pours forth a new supply of flippancies and errors, when we behold, as we have done, an armed champion come forth in full equipment, from some high and lettered retreat of that noble hierarchy...under her venerable auspices, the battles of orthodoxy have been fought; that, in this holy warfare, they are her sons and her scholars, who are ever foremost in the fight, ready at all times to face the threatened mischief, and by the weight of their erudition to overthrow it." And the Rev. J. S. Wilson, in his "sermon preached before the Pro. Synod of Dumfries" and entitled "A plea for a learned Ministry," says: "It is well that our beloved and venerated sister, the Church of England, has out of her richer fulness supplied the intellectual wants and satisfied the cravings for higher culture of her poorer sister in the north." Life-Ed. of the Christian Ministry, p. 267.

Methodist.—"I am not speaking against the Church of England, when I condemn the sacramentarian theories and priestly pretensions which are undermining the Protestantism of that church. The learning or sincerity of some men who have held these notions, should not induce us to accept them, unless they can be proved by the Word of God."

Comment,—In the first place let me tell you that the Church of England is *not* Protestant in the popular acceptation of that word, never has been, and I trust never will be. And the reason, without going into particulars, is twofold. (1.)"What Protestants, as Protestants, disbelieve in, that the church believes in; and (2.) What Protestants, as Protestants, hold, that the Church of England protests against. Take it which way you like, positively or negatively, and the fact is the same. We have no claim to the epithet Protestant." Nowhere in the Prayer Book, nowhere in the articles, does the church speak of herself as Protestant. No, the church is *Catholic*, and so she delights to repeat the word, "I believe in the Holy *Catholic* Church;" "I believe in one *Catholic* and Apostolic Church;" "whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessrry that he hold the *Catholic* faith;" "And the *Catholic* faith is this;" "This is the *Catholic* Faith, which, except a man believe faithfully he cannot be saved." She is not Protestant, and therefore nowhere employs the term. Her creed is not one of *negations*, but of *affirmations*.

In the second place I may tell you that the church is both sacramental and sacerdotal which I presume is what you condemn in the words "sacramentarian theories and priestly pretensions"—"notions," you say, "held by some learned and sincere men" in the church, but forming no part of her system. This is precisely one of the reasons why I have said that the church is *not* Protestant, because, being sacramental and sacerdotal, she holds what Protestants, as Protestants, protest against. Did time allow I might establish her sacramental and sacerdotal character from the Prayer Book and other official documents which only confirm what the Rev. A. J. Bray says in his sermon on preaching. He says: "The Episcopal church is mainly sacramental. I say mainly, because, while in the great centres of population she encourages preaching, while she pays most marked respect to eloquence and fervour, while she is careful to promote great preachers to commanding positions, she lays more stress upon the sacramental services. The sacraments are the life and glory of the English church, and preaching is but an adjunct." And the New Testament is pervaded with Sacramentalism—which simply means the grace of the Sacraments, flowing from the use of them as the principle means of grace in the church. One or two examples must suffice, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit," said Christ, "he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." John iii., 3-5. "Repent," said St. Peter, "and be baptized for the remission of sins." Acts ii., 38. And St. Paul, "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, Who hath raised him from the dead." Col. ii., 12. "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the Blood of Christ, the bread which we break, is it not the communion of the Body of Christ." I. Cor. x. 16.

And as to Sacerdotalism. The Church of England certainly professes, when she appoints men to the ministerial office, to confer in a very solemn manner, what you term "priestly pretensions" or sacerdotal powers. The Bishop addresses to every man whom he admits to the priesthood these words: "Receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a priest in the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands. Whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven; and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained. And be thou a faithful Dispenser of the Word of God, and of His Sacraments." Of course it will readily occur to you that this commission is in substance the words of St. John, xx., 22, 23. The Church of England believes that the ministry which Christ established will subsist, in its integrity, till His second coming; and neither altering nor amending the blessed words of her Divine Head, incorporates them into her Ordinal, claiming the powers which His words convey for her Priests. So that these so-called "notions" are not merely the "notions" of "learned and sincere men" within the English Church, but they are part of her very Self. If you have not been "induced to accept them" it is not because they lack the support of "God's Word."

Methodist,—"No doubt there are evils which arise from existing divisions; yet I firmly believe that all these evangelical churches have a place in God's plans, and are doing important work."

Comment,—Then you "firmly believe" that there are "evils" in "God's plans!" Now, I also firmly believe that "evils arise from existing divisions," but I do not believe that "all these evangelical churches have a place in God's Plan," as that Plan is revealed in Holy Writ. I believe that "Christ is Head over all things to the Church, which is His Body." Eph. i., 22, 23. And I further believe that the "body" can no more be

divided than the "Head." And I still further believe that as there is but "*One* Spirit, *One* Lord, *One* faith, *One* baptism, so *there is* but *One Body*." Eph. iv., 4. In addition to this I believe that the little progress made in the "important work" of evangelizing the world is in a great measure due to our "existing divisions." The heathen see clearly enough that all our "evangelical churches" cannot have a "place in God's Plan," and so they reject the dozen or more Gospels preached to them, sending us home to decide as to what Christianity really is, and when we have ourselves agreed as to what it is, then they will "believe" us. In order that the world may not only "believe" but *know* that He has been sent by the Father, we must have the Lord's own chosen evidence of the Gospel's truth—we must be *One*, and then "*important* work" will be done such as the world has not beheld since the first ages of the church.

Methodist,—"But I cannot think it right, while infidelity is assailing the foundation truths of religion, and vice and sin are enslaving myriads, and the call from heathen lands is so urgent—that men, who claim to be ministers of Christ, should spend their time disparaging other churches, and magnifying the claims of their own denomination and the importance of external rites."

Comment,—This is a mere oratorical flourish intended to divert attention from your own conduct. For pray, what else were you endeavouring to do when writing your tract but "disparaging" the English Church and "magnifying the claims of your own denomination"—Methodism. One should practise what they preach.

I have now reached your six reasons for being a Methodist. Excepting the fourth, they call for no special notice, as the same reasons are given by persons for being Christians of other names.

"I am a *Methodist*, because they teach all the doctrines of the Bible faithfully and with power from on High."

Comment,—This reason is not "*all* Gospel." One or two doctrines or things may be named which are not "taught" though sanctioned by the Bible.

Baptismal regeneration. Titus iii., 5; John iii., 3, 5.

That "one of the principles of the doctrine of Christ" is "the laying on of hands" in Holy Confirmation. Heb. vi., 1, 2; Acts viii., 17; xix.,6. That "no man" may assume the functions of the priesthood unless "called of God as was Aaron." Heb. v., 4.

And I find on referring to your Book of Discipline that Methodism has *mutilated* the Creed: for, when asking assent to it by persons about to be baptized, the article, "*He descended into hell*"—is omitted. Thus ignoring the following passages of Scripture: Acts ii., 3; St. Luke xxiii., 43; St. John xx., 17; Eph. iv., 9; I. St. Peter iii., 19.

And to give but one instance of the other side of the picture, I may name one "doctrine" which is held, though no where to be found in the Bible—that a man is to be "laid aside," "excluded" from the church of God, because he has refused to attend "class meetings." B. of D. p. 32.

All of which, instead of being a reason why you are a "Methodist," should be sufficient to induce you to *renounce* Methodism.

I have now concluded my reply to your tract. I fully expected to have given a "bird's eye view" of the more important things touched on in these letters, but that must be left for my next and final letter.

LETTER NO. 15.

DEAR SIR,—My work is drawing to a close, and before I take leave of the author of the tract entitled as above, I would ask him to glance back with me at the ground passed over in the course of these letters. It may be of service to the interested reader to group together some of the principal things pointed out in replying to the tract in question, which I now proceed to do, the number at the *end* of each paragraph indicating the letter in which the arguments or facts supporting the particular summary may be found.

I. That the English Church in retaining the use of a Liturgy in public worship, has recognized the "royal priesthood" of the laity, to take active, audible part in the service of the Sanctuary, thus securing the liberty of the individual.—1.

II. That on the testimony of Wesley, Adam Clarke, and leading men of some of the Protestant bodies, the Liturgy of the English church is "scriptural," "rich," "venerable," and "stands next to the Bible itself."-1.

III. That following the example of the early Apostolic church, the English Church provides for at least a *weekly* celebration of the Holy Communion, thus making ample provision for the sustaining and nourishing of the spiritual life.—1.

IV. That in addressing all brought into covenant relationship with God in Holy Baptism as "children of God," and answerable for grace *then* received, she simply adopts the Bible mode.—2.

V. That the English Church insists upon the necessity of a true repentance, and proclaims with no uncertain sound that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord."—2.

VI. That in mapping out the Christian year as set forth in the Prayer Book, the English Church falls in with the Mind of the Spirit as to the form in which the Gospel of Christ shall be presented to man—that it shall be presented in that particular form in which it is set forth in Holy Scripture.—3

VII. That foreseeing the liability of man to err, the English Church has made very remarkable provision to preserve "the proportion of faith" assigning to each doctrine its proper place and proportionate value, thus "rightly dividing the word."—3.

VIII. That in adhering closely to Scripture the English Church tells her children that the preparation for Heaven is a task for which the longest life is short, and that we must "endure unto the end" if we would be saved.—4.

IX. That in leaving the English Church you set at nought one of the fundamental principles of Wesley—the founder of Wesleyan Methodism—who shortly before his death declared he "lived and died" a churchman, and solemnly implored his followers notwithstanding all temptations to the contrary, to remain "Church of England men."—5.

X. That the "Methodist church," being composed only of *religious* men or *religiously disposed* men, as described in the Book of Discipline, is directly contrary to the Church of Christ, which Holy Scripture declares to be composed of "good" and "bad," "wheat" and "tares."—5.

XI. That in holding merely the *subjective* view of the Church you have apparently lost sight of the other and more important one—the *objective*—the aspect as it refers to Christ, and consequently you have failed to realize the importance of preserving the *oneness* of Christ's Body Mystical.—6

XII. That in beseeching her children to "come to Christ," the English Church tells them *how* and *where* to come to Him—in *all* the Divinely appointed Means of Grace, in His Mystical Body.—6.

XIII. That in assigning to Class Meetings the position as set forth in the B. of D., Methodism has exalted a purely human invention above a holy life, and the Divinely appointed Means of Grace.—6.

XIV. That you were most uncharitable in charging believers in Baptismal Regeneration as "ignorant of spiritual religion," your shaft in its course hitting John Wesley and Modern Methodism.—6.

XV. That in charging churchmen as having the "form of Godliness, but denying the power thereof," and that by "associating with such people" you "would be more likely to be led into worldly folly than helped heavenward," you violated that charity which "thinketh no evil" and grossly slandered a large body of Christians.—7.

XVI. That Holy Baptism is the Divinely appointed way of entering the Church of God, Wesley and your own baptismal office witnessing to the same thing.—7.

XVII. That the Ministry which God appointed for His Church, both under the Old and New Dispensations, consisted of *three* orders, and consequently neither *two* nor *one* are or can be sufficient.—8.

XVIII. That the authority to ordain was vested in the highest or Apostolic order by Christ Himself, and that He provided for the perpetuation of His Ministry on the principle of Apostolic Succession.—8.

XIX. That during her existence of eighteen centuries, the Church of England has been a faithful witness to these Divine principles, most firmly believing in and acting upon them to this day.—8.

XX. That Wesley firmly held the same principles.—8.

XXI. That the Apostolic office is still in existence in this year of grace 1885, otherwise Christ's own promise has failed.—8.

XXII. That Episcopacy is necessary because of Divine Institution, and because God's church has been governed in that way for over 3,000 years.—8.

XXIII. That the Episcopal form of church Government was the only one known to Christianity for the first 1,500 years of the Christian era.—8.

XXIV. That in point of fact Methodism firmly holds a succession of *some sort* as essential, allowing no *un-*"ordained" person to administer the Lord's Supper; but that *this* succession having begun with men without Divine authority to confer Divine authority, is not *Apostolic*.—8.

XXV. That while "all may go directly to Christ," yet, as Wesley contends, we are to wait for God's Grace in the Means of Grace which He has appointed, of which means He has appointed certain of our fellowmen to be the administrators.—9.

XXVI. That there is a Divinely appointed channel for God's Grace to flow from Him into the individual, and that God's Church is its Divinely appointed *Reservoir* on earth.—9.

XXVII. That *as a rule* God has always dealt with men *through men*, thus putting "human agency between man and his Maker."—9.

XXVIII. That while you strongly condemned the "standing between" principle in the English Church, it was found to exist to a still greater extent in Methodism.—9.

XXIX. That God commissions men to speak or act in His name in one of two ways, *mediately* or *immediately*; that the "Methodist ministry" has not been commissioned in either of these ways, and therefore must

be set down as "*priestly pretenders*" when they presume to administer the Sacrament of Holy Communion.—10.

XXX. That Wesley regarded the preachers he appointed as *lay* preachers, and not as duly ordained men with authority to administer the Sacraments of Christ's Church.—10.

XXXI. That as a matter of fact the Wesleyan body in England had no kind of ordination whatever up to 1836 when it was "voted back," and consequently the "ordainers" of that year were but *laymen*, without authority to confer ministerial powers.—10.

XXXII. That the church "unity" contemplated by our Lord was not merely an "invisible" one, which He alone could see, but an outward *visible* unity which alone the *world* could see.—11.

XXXIII. That "corporate unity" has been recently acknowledged as "essential" by the Canadian Methodists, though you have branded it as "Romish and unscriptural."—11.

XXXIV. That Methodism does not "continue in the Apostles' fellowship," but has created a new fellowship of its own, which is not *Apostolic*.—11.

XXXV. That while there exists schools of thought within the English Church, yet no new "fellowship" is created, but her (nearly) 21,000,000 laity and 30,000 clergy "continue" in the same "Apostolic fellowship."—12.

XXXVI. That in the English Church there is Organic Unity in diversity, while in Methodism there is diversity without Organic Unity.—12.

XXXVII. That John Wesley was a High churchman.—12.

XXXVIII. That one of the qualifications of the early Methodist preachers was to attend "church and sacraments"—to love and never separate from her.—12.

XXXIX. That on the first occasion of a preacher administering the Sacraments, he was taken to task by Wesley and warned not to repeat the offence unless he wished to leave Methodism.—12.

XL. That no "deeds" of Wesley contemplate secession from the English Church or provide for the administration of the Sacraments.—12.

XLI. That Wesley intended the Methodist society to be merely a society or religious order *within* the English Church, and not an independent body.—12.

XLII. That on the testimony of such men as Drs. Rigg, Pope, and Osborne, Methodism is a declining body in England, large numbers being absorbed in the Church of England.—12.

XLIII. That a similar movement has set in both in the United States and Canada, as seen in the fact that large numbers of Methodist preachers apply for Holy Orders in the Church.—12.

XLIV. That on the testimony of leading English Methodists and others, there is nothing that can compare with the revival of religion within the English Church, that she has a profound hold of the English people, and that a great future is in store for her.—12.

XLV. That Wesley towards the close of his life declared he held precisely the same doctrine then as he had held for 50 years before.—13.

XLVI. That there is perfect agreement between John Wesley and the most advanced churchmen of the present day as to the practical application of the doctrine of Baptism.—13.

XLVII. That Wesley firmly held the doctrine of Baptismal regeneration.—13.

XLVIII. That in denouncing Baptismal Regeneration as a "dangerous heresy" your accusation was really shot at the Holy Scriptures and God Who inspired them.—13.

XLIX. That the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration has not a "dangerous" tendency when taught and applied as it is in Holy Scripture and by the Church.—13.

L. That very few, if any, of the English Church clergy secede to Methodism, and that the leakage of the laity is being effectually stopped.—13.

LI. That perhaps the secret of so many attacks being made on the Church is the fact that she is marching forward with unexampled success, leaving many competitors behind.—14.

LII. That as a rule they are men of "ability" and "culture" who leave Methodism for the Church.—14.

LIII. That Methodism is indebted to the English church for most of the "theology" for its "candidates," as laid down in the course of study.—14.

LIV. That on the testimony of outsiders the theological literature of a country like Scotland stands indebted to the English Church for its best acquisitions; that in the battles for the maintenance of the Faith her sons and scholars lead the way.—14.

LV. That the English Church is *not* Protestant in the common acceptation of that word, but Catholic.—14.

LVI. That the Sacramental system is an essential part of the English Church, and that it rests on the authority of God's Word.—14.

LVII. That Methodism does *not* "teach all the doctrines of the Bible;" that it has *mutilated* the creed of christendom and ignored many passages of Scripture; and that it imposes the *class-meeting* test of which the Bible knows nothing.—14.

But to draw to a conclusion. I have completed the task undertaken some time ago. Line after line, and paragraph after paragraph of your tract have been dealt with, and I trust my answers have been kindly though courageously stated. If I have not written convincingly enough to induce you, my dear sir, to return to the bosom of your rightful Spiritual Mother, I trust enough has been produced to convince you that a churchman has very much more to say than you ever dreamed of—assuming your tract to represent your knowledge of our side of the case.

My great object however in writing these letters, besides defending the church to which I owe so much, has been to strengthen those of my brethren who need it, to stimulate the desire to investigate their own position, that it is one which no mere stroke of the pen can overthrow, because based on *Catholic* and *Apostolic* ground, and confirmed by the voice of God as revealed in His Word. If this humble effort should thus prove useful I shall not have altogether written in vain.

I must, in closing, state in answer to my Methodist friends who think these letters should not have appeared, that they have been called forth by an unjust attack made by one of themselves upon the Church of England; that if the attack had not been made, this defence should not have appeared. And if in the course of the defence, Methodism has been somewhat unmasked, I am not to blame.

One word more. I cannot, Mr. Editor, conclude these letters without publicly acknowledging your great kindness, a kindness all the greater because I believe you have not always agreed with me, in permitting me to speak to a wide circle of readers, and to place before many of them, perhaps for the first time, the *church argument* to a limited extent, and the relation that John Wesley intended Methodism should have to the Church of England.

That this humble effort may be to the advancement of God's glory, and the good of His church, is the earnest prayer of

Yours, very gratefully,

CHURCHMAN.